

Flavorful Portuguese Recipes for Everyday Cooking

Corn Bread (Broa)

Portuguese cornbread, or Broa, is different from the cornbread you might be familiar with in North American cuisine. Broa is a firmer, hardier type of bread that doesn't have the same characteristic sweetness. Instead, it's rich with the flavor of cornmeal and stands up beautifully to soups and charcuterie.

Serves 16 | Prep. time 3 hours | Cooking time 50 minutes

Ingredients

- 3½ cups bread flour
- 1½ cups finely ground cornmeal
- 1 teaspoon sea salt
- 2½ cups warm water
- 2¼ teaspoons active dry yeast

Directions

1. In a large bowl, combine the bread flour, ground cornmeal, and sea salt. Mix and set aside.
2. In a separate bowl, combine ½ cup of the water and the dry yeast. Let it rest for 5-10 minutes or until the mixture becomes a little bubbly.
3. Add the yeast mixture to the flour and mix. Continue adding the remaining water, a little at a time, until you have a dough that can be easily formed but is still somewhat soft. The dough should not be so wet that it's sticky.
4. Form the dough into a ball, and then place it in a lightly oiled bowl. Cover with a damp cloth and let rest for about 2 hours or until the dough has doubled in size.
5. Dust the countertop with a little flour and cornmeal.
6. Remove the dough from the bowl and place on the counter. Punch the dough to release some of the air, then roll again into a ball.
7. Dust the dough with flour.
8. Use cooking spray or oil to grease a baking sheet and place the dough on top of it.
9. Cover and let rest for about 30-45 minutes.
10. Preheat the oven to 400°F (204°C).
11. Place the bread in the oven and bake for approximately 50-55 minutes, or until the bread is golden brown and has a hollow sound when you tap on the bottom of it with your fingers.
12. Place the bread on a cooling rack and let it cool before slicing.

Nutrition facts (per serving)

Calories 117, fat 38 g, carbs 24 g, sugar 0.1 g,
Protein 3 g, sodium 146.4 mg

Francesinha

If you ever hear someone speak of “The” Portuguese sandwich, they’re speaking of *francesinha* – a decadent, messy, and unforgettable culinary experience that will forever change your ideas of what a sandwich should be. It is said that this sandwich came to be after Portuguese refugees who fled to France returned with an insatiable love of melted cheese layered over their sandwiches.

Francesinha is arguably one of Portugal’s most famous dishes and a must-try if you’re ever visiting the country, especially the city of Porto. This sandwich is definitely decadent enough to share, but it’s also acceptable to enjoy one all to yourself. Just be warned that it’s not light on calories!

Serves 2 | Prep. time 15 minutes | Cooking time 20 minutes

Ingredients

- 6 slices white bread
- ¼ pound beef steak, thinly sliced and cooked to desired doneness
- ¼ pound ham, sliced thin
- ¼ pound cured Portuguese sausage, sliced
- 10 cheese slices, such as Münster, Edam, or Provolone cheese
- 2 eggs
- French fries for serving, optional

Sauce

- 2 tablespoons lard or butter
- 1 cup yellow onion, sliced thin
- 3 garlic cloves, minced
- 1 cup tomato, crushed
- 1 bay leaf
- 1 tablespoon piri piri sauce
- 1½ cups lager-style beer
- ½ cup port wine
- 1 cup beef broth
- 1 tablespoon cornstarch
- Salt and pepper to taste

Directions

1. Prepare the sauce. Add the butter or lard to a saucepan over medium heat. Add the onions to the hot oil and sauté for 5 minutes or until tender.
2. Add the garlic and sauté for 2-3 minutes longer.
3. Add in the tomato, bay leaf, piri piri sauce, lager-style beer, port wine, and broth.
4. Increase the heat and stir until the sauce comes to a low boil.
5. Reduce the heat to medium-low and simmer for 10 minutes.
6. Scoop out about ¼ cup of the sauce and then whisk the cornstarch into it, making a slurry.
7. Add the slurry to the saucepan and stir. Add salt and pepper to taste. Reduce the heat to low and continue cooking, stirring occasionally, until you’re ready to use the sauce.
8. To make the sandwich, lightly oil a large skillet and add the meats over medium-low heat, cooking just long enough to warm them through.
9. Toast the bread.
10. Preheat your oven’s broiler.
11. Assemble the sandwiches by placing one piece of bread on a heat-proof plate. Layer each with the steak, Portuguese sausage, and ham. Top with another piece of bread. Repeat with the remaining pieces of bread and meat.
12. Cover each sandwich with sliced cheese on all sides (except the bottom).
13. Make a small indent in the center of the sandwich and carefully crack an egg into each.
14. Place the plate under the broiler for approximately 3-5 minutes, or until the cheese is bubbly and the egg is cooked to your liking (traditionally, the egg is served quite runny).
15. Carefully remove the plate and generously add sauce to the sandwich, covering it in its entirety.
16. Serve with French fries, if desired.

Nutrition facts (per serving)

Calories 989, fat 61 g, carbs 43 g, sugar 9 g,
Protein 64 g, sodium 1890 mg

Salt Cod Fritters (Pasteis de Bacalhau)

Pasteis de Bacalhau is delectable little fritters made of salted cod. The process of preparing salted cod takes a couple of days, so this recipe skips the step and uses pre-cooked salted cod. If you don't have salt cod, you can certainly use unsalted cod in this dish, maybe adding a bit more salt to the batter and having it taste equally delicious.

In Portugal, these fritters are served as a type of tapas or light meal but can also be added to a grain and served as a main dish.

Serves 12 | Prep. time 20 minutes | Cooking time 20 minutes

Ingredients

- 1 pound salt cod, cooked
- 2 large eggs
- 1½ cups all-purpose flour
- 1 tablespoon lime juice
- 2 garlic cloves, minced
- ¼ cup fresh chives, minced
- ¼ cup fresh parsley, minced
- 1 teaspoon coarse ground black pepper
- Salt to taste
- 2 cups oil for frying

Directions

1. Prepare the pre-cooked salt cod. Carefully remove any small bones and then chop the salt cod into bite-size pieces.
2. Add the salt cod to a bowl.
3. In a separate bowl, combine the flour, eggs, lime juice, garlic, chives, parsley, coarse ground black pepper, and salt to taste. Mix well until a smooth batter with the consistency of a thick paste forms.
4. Add the salt cod to the batter and mix. It's fine if the salt cod pieces break up into smaller pieces.
5. Heat the oil in a deep fryer or a deep skillet over high heat.
6. Once the oil is hot, scoop out a spoonful of the batter about the size of a golf ball. The fritters can be added to the oil as is or shaped into a flat disk or oval if desired.
7. Place the fritters in the oil, working in small batches. Fry for about 3-4 minutes per side if using a deep skillet to fry. If using a deep fryer, the fritters should float to the surface, indicating they're done after about 6-7 minutes.
8. Remove the fritters from the oil and set aside on a rack lined with paper towels to drain and absorb any excess oil.
9. Serve warm on a platter and enjoy.

Nutrition facts (per serving)

Calories 436, fat 37 g, carbs 12 g, sugar 0 g,
Protein 12 g, sodium 2523 mg

Seafood Stew (Cadeirada)

This simple seafood stew offers the fresh flavors of Portugal's coastal regions. *Cadeirada* showcases the fresh seafood of these regions and is wonderful when accompanied by a thick slice of crusty Portuguese bread.

Serves 6 | Prep. time 15 minutes | Cooking time 1 hour

Ingredients

- 2 tablespoons olive oil
- 1 cup yellow onion, diced
- 3 garlic cloves, minced
- 1 cup red bell pepper, sliced
- 3 cups tomatoes, diced
- 1 tablespoon piri piri pepper, chopped
- 1 large pinch saffron, crushed
- 1 teaspoon paprika
- ¼ teaspoon ground clove
- 1 tablespoon fresh thyme, chopped
- 1 cup dry white wine
- 2 bay leaves
- 1 cup clam juice
- 3 cups fish or chicken stock
- 4 cups potatoes, washed and cubed
- ½ pound prawns, cleaned and deveined
- ½ pound cod, cut into cubes
- ½ pound haddock, cut into cubes
- Salt and pepper to taste
- Lemon wedges to serve

Directions

1. Heat the olive oil in a large stock pot over medium heat.
2. Add the onion and red bell pepper. Sauté for 5-7 minutes or until tender.
3. Add the garlic, piri piri peppers, saffron, paprika, ground clove, fresh thyme, salt, and pepper to taste. Cook for 2-3 minutes or until fragrant.
4. Add the dry white wine and bay leaves. Cook for 3-5 minutes or until the wine reduces by about half.
5. Add the chopped tomatoes, crushing them with the back of a wooden spoon while cooking for approximately 3-5 minutes.
6. Add the clam juice and fish or chicken stock, along with the potatoes.
7. Bring to a boil over medium-high heat.
8. Once the liquid begins to boil, reduce the heat to medium-low, cover, and cook for 20 minutes.
9. Add the prawns, cod, and haddock to the stew.
10. Replace the lid and cook for 7-10 minutes or until the fish and seafood are cooked through.
11. Serve garnished with lemon wedges.

Nutrition (per serving)

Calories 338, fat 6 g, carbs 32 g, sugar 6 g,
Protein 30 g, sodium 872 mg

Piri Piri Chicken

Many people are familiar with piri piri (or peri peri) chicken as part of South African cuisine. However, the dish is rumored to have been brought there by Portuguese settlers and traders to the region and remains a popular chicken dish in Portugal today.

The sauce is made using piri piri peppers, and then the chicken is basted during roasting or grilling. It's a mixture of spice, with a bit of tart from the citrus. It's pure deliciousness, especially with a cooling dipping sauce on the side to counter the heat.

Serves 8 | Prep. time 20 minutes | Cooking time 1 hour 20 minutes

Ingredients

- 3 pounds chicken, spatchcocked or butterflied
- 4 garlic cloves, minced
- 2 tablespoons butter
- 1 tablespoon fresh thyme, chopped
- 1 tablespoon fresh parsley, chopped
- 1 tablespoon lemon juice
- Salt and pepper to taste

Piri Piri Sauce

- 1 cup red bell pepper, sliced thick
- 1 cup onion, sliced thick
- 3 tablespoons piri piri peppers, minced
- 2 garlic cloves, minced
- ½ cup olive oil
- 2 teaspoons paprika
- 2 teaspoons cayenne pepper
- 1 teaspoon coarse ground black pepper
- ¼ cup red wine vinegar
- 1 tablespoon lemon juice

Dipping Sauce

- 1 cup plain Greek yogurt
- ½ cup ricotta cheese
- ¼ cup fresh parsley, chopped
- 1 tablespoon fresh basil, chopped
- 1 tablespoon fresh mint, chopped
- 1 teaspoon lemon zest
- Salt and pepper to taste

Directions

1. Preheat the oven to 400°F (204°C) and lightly oil a baking sheet.
2. Place the red bell pepper and onion on the baking sheet and roast for 15-20 minutes.
3. Prepare the chicken by laying it flat on a baking sheet.
4. In a bowl, combine the butter, garlic, thyme, and parsley.
5. Make small slits over the entire surface of the skin of the chicken. Place a small dollop of the butter mixture into each.
6. Sprinkle the surface of the chicken with lemon juice and season with salt and pepper as desired.
7. Remove the vegetables from the oven and set aside to cool slightly.
8. Increase the heat of the oven to 450°F (232°C).
9. Place the chicken in the oven and roast for 20 minutes.
10. Add the roasted red bell peppers and onions to a food processor or high-powered blender. Add the piri piri peppers, garlic, olive oil, paprika, cayenne pepper, black pepper, red wine vinegar, and lemon juice. Puree until smooth.
11. After 20 minutes, pull the chicken out of the oven and reduce the heat to 350°F (177°C).
12. Brush the chicken generously with the piri piri sauce, then place it back in the oven.
13. Continue roasting the chicken, basting it with more sauce every 15-20 minutes until the chicken is cooked through and reads 165°F (74°C) in the center. This should take approximately 40 minutes, depending on the thickness of the chicken.
14. Remove the chicken from the oven and let it rest for 10 minutes.
15. Prepare the dipping sauce by combining all the dipping sauce ingredients in a blender. Blend until smooth.
16. Serve the piri piri chicken with the dipping sauce on the side.

Nutrition (per serving)

Calories 568, fat 44 g, carbs 5 g, sugar 2 g,
Protein 35 g, sodium 148 mg

Tomato Rice

Tomato rice is a treasured side dish throughout the various regions of Portugal. It's a simple but flavorful dish that's easy to make. This dish is best when the tomatoes are fresh and perfectly ripe from the garden.

Serves 4 | Prep. time 10 minutes | Cooking time 45 minutes

Ingredients

- 2 tablespoons olive oil
- 2 tablespoons lard
- 1 cup yellow onion, diced
- 3 garlic cloves, minced
- 1 bay leaf
- 2½ cups tomatoes, diced
- 1½ cups chicken or vegetable broth
- 1 cup long-grain rice
- Salt and pepper to taste

Directions

1. Add the olive oil and lard to a large saucepan over medium-high heat.
2. Once the oil is melted and hot, add the onion, garlic, and bay leaf, and sauté for 2-3 minutes or until fragrant.
3. Add the tomatoes to the pot, using a wooden spoon to break them apart further and release their juices.
4. Reduce the heat to medium-low and simmer for 20-25 minutes.
5. Add the vegetable or chicken stock, rice, and salt and pepper to taste. Increase the heat to medium-high until the liquid comes to a low boil. Reduce the heat to low, cover, and let simmer for 20 minutes or until the rice is tender.
6. Fluff with a fork and serve.

Nutrition (per serving)

Calories 213, fat 13 g, carbs 20 g, sugar 4 g,
Protein 2 g, sodium 149 mg

Custard Tarts (Pasteis de Nata)

You can't wander into a bakery or restaurant that serves dessert in Portugal without finding these delicious little tarts. You could use prepared dough for this recipe, but taking the extra time to make and laminate the dough from scratch really makes all the difference in the end.

Serves 12 | Prep. time 20 minutes

Resting time 4 hours | Cooking time 30 minutes

Ingredients

Dough

- 1 cup all-purpose flour
- ½ cup unsalted butter, softened
- ¼ teaspoons salt
- ⅓ cup water, very cold

Custard

- ⅓ cup all-purpose flour
- 6 egg yolks
- 1½ cups whole milk or preferred milk substitute
- ¼ teaspoon salt
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
- 1 teaspoon lemon zest (optional)

Homemade Simple Syrup

- 1 cup white sugar
- ½ cup water
- 1 teaspoon ground cinnamon
- 1 teaspoon lemon juice

Directions

1. To make the dough, in a large bowl, combine the flour, water, and salt. Mix until a smooth dough forms.
2. Transfer the dough out onto a lightly floured surface, knead for 2-3 minutes, then cover and let the dough rest for 10-15 minutes.
3. Return the dough and, using a rolling pin dusted with flour, roll the dough out to about an eighth of an inch thick.
4. The next step is to laminate the dough with the butter. Spread a quarter of the butter over the entire surface of the dough, then fold the dough over twice.
5. Dust the rolling pin with more flour and roll to an eighth of an inch thick again.
6. Add another quarter of the butter to the dough and repeat the laminating process until all the butter has been used.
7. Cover the dough and chill it for either 30 minutes in the refrigerator or 10-15 minutes in the freezer until the butter is inside the dough and it is firm.
8. Roll the dough out once more, then roll it into a log shape form. Wrap tightly and refrigerate for at least four hours.
9. When you're ready to prepare the tarts, begin by making the syrup. Combine the sugar, water, ground cinnamon, and lemon juice in a pot over medium-high heat.
10. Stir once to mix, then allow the sugar mixture to cook undisturbed for about 5-7 minutes, or until it reads 210°F (99°C) with a candy thermometer.
11. Remove the syrup from the heat and set aside.
12. Next, prepare the custard by combining the flour, whole milk, and salt in a saucepan over medium heat.
13. Cook while whisking continually for 5-7 minutes or until the milk thickens. Make sure that the milk doesn't scald the bottom of the pan.
14. Remove the pan from the heat and allow it to cool for 10-15 minutes.
15. In a small bowl, combine the egg yolks, vanilla, and lemon zest. Whisk lightly.
16. Pour the egg mixture into the milk mixture, along with the cooled syrup. Whisk until well combined and creamy. Set aside.
17. Preheat the oven to 450°F (232°C) and prepare a 12-cup muffin tin by lightly oiling each cup.
18. Remove the dough from the refrigerator, uncover it, and cut the log into twelve equal pieces.
19. Take each piece and flatten it slightly, then place it in one of the muffin tins. Press the bottom and the sides to cover the inside of the cup completely with the dough.
20. Pour the custard mix into each muffin cup.
21. Place in the oven and bake for 12-15 minutes, or until the tops are lightly browned and the custard becomes a bit bubbly or blistered.

22. Allow the tarts to cool slightly, then remove from the muffin tins and serve.

Nutrition (per serving)

Calories 235, fat 11 g, carbs 30 g, sugar 18 g,

Protein 4 g, sodium 115 mg

***These recipes and more are found in Sarah Spencer's *A Taste of Portugal: Traditional Cooking Made Easy with Authentic Portuguese Recipes*. To get your own copy, click on the cover below or click [here](#).

