

Authentic Vegetable Paella (Paella de Verduras)

Serves: 4–6

Pan: 13–15 inch paella pan:

Ingredients

- 1/4 cup extra virgin olive oil
- 1 medium onion, finely chopped
- 1 red bell pepper, cut into strips
- 1 green bell pepper, cut into strips
- 1/2 cup tomato purée
- 2 cloves garlic, minced
- 1 small green zucchini, cut into half moons
- 1 small yellow zucchini, cut into half moons
- 1 cup of fresh mushrooms
- 1 cup green beans, trimmed and cut into 2-inch pieces
- 1/2 cup artichoke hearts (fresh or jarred, quartered)
- 1/2 cup peas (fresh or frozen)
- 1/2 cup cooked butter beans (or white beans)
- 1 tsp sweet Spanish paprika (pimentón):
- Pinch of saffron threads, soaked in 2 Tbsp warm water
- 5–6 cups vegetable broth (kept hot)
- 2 cups Spanish bomba or Calasparra rice (short-grain)
- Salt, to taste

To garnish:

- Roasted piquillo or pimiento peppers
- Lemon wedges

Method

1. **Heat the oil:** Place the paella pan over medium heat. Add the olive oil and warm until shimmering.
2. **Heat the broth:** In a separate pot, gently heat the vegetable broth and keep it warm over low heat until ready to use
3. **Sauté vegetables:** Add onion, garlic, peppers, zucchini, green beans, artichokes, and peas. Sauté until softened and lightly golden.
4. **Make the sofrito:** Push vegetables to the edges, leaving space in the center. Add paprika, stir quickly (so it doesn't burn), then add the grated tomato. Cook down 2–3 minutes into a thick sauce.

5. **Add broth & saffron:** Pour in the hot vegetable broth. Stir in the saffron liquid and the beans. Season with salt. Raise heat to bring to a strong boil. Taste the broth—it should be well-seasoned, since the rice will absorb the flavor.
6. **Add rice:** Sprinkle the rice evenly across the pan. Stir once to distribute, then do not stir again.
7. **Cook rice:**
 - Boil on high for about 8 minutes.
 - Reduce heat to low and simmer another 12–15 minutes, until the broth has evaporated and the rice is tender.
8. **For socarrat:** In the last 1–2 minutes, raise the heat to medium-high and listen for a faint crackling sound (not burning, but toasting). Remove from heat as soon as you smell a nutty aroma
9. **Rest:** Remove from heat, cover with a clean kitchen towel, and let rest 5 minutes.
10. **Garnish & serve:** Decorate with strips of roasted pimientos and lemon wedges. Serve straight from the pan, letting guests help themselves.