

Jackie Vierno's Puerto Rican & Cuban Family Recipe Guide

~ Buen Provecho!

Making Pernil

From **Puerto Rico Cookery** by Carmen Valldejuli

Prepare the meat at least 3 days before roasting:

1. Remove excess skin and fat
2. Weigh meat and jot down exact weight since both quantity of seasoning and time required for roasting depends on its weight.
3. Wash meat rapidly under running water, drain and wipe dry with absorbent paper.
4. Place meat in large Ziploc bag, fat side up. Score top of roast in diamonds.
5. Prepare seasoning according to weight of trimmed roast. Season roast, seal bag, and set bag inside a bowl or pan in refrigerator. Turn meat each day so the marinade permeates all surfaces of the roast.

Prepare seasoning for 6 to 7-pound roast:

Crush and mix together using a mortar and pestle

8 whole black peppercorns

8 cloves garlic, peeled

2 teaspoons whole dried oregano

2 tablespoons olive oil

2 tablespoons vinegar

1 teaspoon salt for **each** pound of meat

Roasting:

1. Remove roast from fridge ½ hour before cooking time.
2. Preheat oven to 400 degrees. Place roast in a roasting pan.
3. Drain off any liquid that may have seeped from the meat and pour liquid over meat before putting it in the oven.
4. Roast for 1 hour at 400 degrees, then drop temperature back to 300 degrees. It may take about 4 more hours until done.
5. Start taking temperature of meat after the second hour at 300 degrees. Insert digital thermometer into the center of the roast. Be sure thermometer is not resting on bone or fat.
6. Roast is done when meat temperature is 185 degrees.
7. Remove from oven, and let it rest 20-30 minutes before slicing.

Moros y Cristianos (Black Beans & Rice)

Makes 8 servings

4 ounces slab bacon, rind removed and cut into 1/4 inch dice

or 5 Tb Spanish olive oil

1 medium onion, finely chopped

1 medium green bell pepper, seeded and finely chopped

2 cloves garlic, finely chopped

1 cup dry black beans rinsed, soaked overnight, and prepared according to directions on package to yield 2 – 2 1/2 cups cooked black beans

or **two** 16-ounce cans black beans, undrained

2 cups raw converted white rice

4 1/2 cups water

2 teaspoons salt

1 bay leaf

2 Tablespoons pure Spanish olive oil

1/4 teaspoon ground cumin

Freshly ground black pepper to taste

1. In a large saucepan, cook the bacon 6-8 minutes over low heat, or heat the oil until fragrant. Add the onion, bell pepper and garlic, and cook stirring until tender, 6-8 minutes. Add the remaining ingredients and cook over medium-high heat until all the water has been absorbed and small craters form over the surface of the rice, 10-15 minutes.
2. Stir with a fork, cover, and cook over low heat until the rice is tender, 10-15 minutes. Discard the bay leaf and serve.

From **Memories of a Cuban Kitchen**, written by Mary Urrutia Randelman & Joan Schwartz

Making Tostones

From **Puerto Rico Cookery** by Carmen Valldejuli

Makes **12-18** tostones

3 green plantains

4 cups water

2 cloves garlic, peeled and crushed

2 tablespoons salt

Lard or vegetable oil for frying

1. Peel plantains and cut into diagonal slices 1-inch thick
2. Add crushed garlic and salt to water in large bowl. Soak plantain slices for **15 minutes**.
3. Drain well and deep fry in fat, heated to 350 degrees, about 7 minutes. We use a cast iron skillet for frying. Fat should be 1 ½ - 2 inches deep in pan.
4. Remove from pan and place on absorbent paper.
5. Pound slices flat using a tostonera or use your hand. Fold wax paper over plantain, then put a flat pot holder over the wax paper to protect your hand as you press down.
6. Dip the smashed plantain in the salted water again and remove immediately. Drain thoroughly on absorbent paper.
7. You can pause after this step if you are still a few hours from dinner time. Second fry should happen within 40 minutes of serving, although keeping tostones warm in a 200-degree oven can work, but not ideal.
8. Second fry ... deep fry in fat heated to 375 degrees until crisp and golden. Remove and drain on absorbent paper. Sprinkle lightly with salt. Serve with mayo-ketchup or as is.

Mayo-Ketchup

Crush 1 clove garlic

Add mayo (@ ½ cup)

Add ketchup (@ 3 tablespoons)

Stir, add Worcestershire Sauce (@ 1 teaspoon)

Stir and taste. Should be color of poached salmon (see pic).

Should taste sweet, sour, and creamy.

May need a bit more ketchup (sweet) and/or Worcestershire Sauce (salt/sour).

Use as a dip for **Tostones** (twice fried plantains).



Habichuelas al Escabeche - Pickled Green Beans

Makes 8 servings

2 pounds fresh green beans, tips snapped off

1/2 cup red wine vinegar

1/3 cup pure Spanish olive oil

1 clove garlic, crushed

1 tablespoon sugar

1 tablespoon salt

2 tablespoons finely chopped fresh parsley

1 small yellow onion, thinly sliced and separated into rings

Freshly ground black pepper to taste

1. Bring a pot of salted water to a boil over medium heat, add the beans, and cook, uncovered, until they are medium-soft, 7-10 minutes. Check frequently to prevent overcooking. In a large mixing bowl, combine the remaining ingredients.
2. Drain the beans, and while they are still warm, toss them with the vinaigrette. Marinate at room temperature at least 1 hour. Serve cold or at room temperature.

Making CubanOs

For each person you'll need:

1 Club roll, split, but still connected at one edge

Each sandwich needs:

Yellow mustard on one side of the roll

2-4 slices of Swiss cheese (depending on size of Swiss slices), split between both sides of roll

2 1/2 slices of ham (Black Bear Virginia Ham), on one side of roll

Pernil slices, warm, on the other side of the roll

Dill pickle slices to cover in a single layer on top of the pernil (fresh from deli best)

Cooking sandwich:

Butter outside of roll, both sides. Room temperature butter best.

Set stovetop burner to medium-low. Use plancha or a pot lid to press down on the sandwich.

Watch carefully, may take 3-4 minutes, or longer, per side to toast roll, melt cheese, and warm all things inside sandwich.

Best to check progress after 2 minutes and flip to other side to be sure bread is not burning before everything inside is warm and melted. Good luck!

Serve with Plantain Chips (and a green vegetable).

My Family Recipe for Black Beans

Jackie Vierno

CUBAN BLACK BEANS

INGREDIENTS

- 1 pound dried black beans, picked through, rinsed
- 1 bay leaf
- 1 medium onion, finely chopped, divided
- 1 green bell pepper, seeds and ribs removed, finely chopped, divided
- 8 garlic cloves, finely grated, divided
- 5 teaspoons Diamond Crystal or 1 tablespoon Morton kosher salt, plus more
- 1 teaspoon dried Mexican or Italian oregano, divided
- ¼ cup extra-virgin olive oil
- Freshly ground black pepper
- Cilantro leaves with tender stems (for serving; optional)

RECIPE PREPARATION

- Bring beans, bay leaf, ¼ cup chopped onion, ¼ cup chopped bell pepper, 1 Tbsp. grated garlic, 5 tsp. Diamond Crystal or 1 Tbsp. Morton salt, ½ tsp. oregano, and 5 quarts water to a boil in a large pot. Reduce heat to medium and cook, stirring occasionally and adding more hot water if needed to cover, until beans are tender and covered by about ¼" liquid, 2½–3 hours. Discard bay leaf.
- Meanwhile, heat oil in a medium skillet over medium-low. Add remaining onion, bell pepper, garlic, and oregano; season with salt and pepper. Cook, stirring occasionally, until onions are very soft and beginning to brown, 15–20 minutes. Stir into cooked beans. Top with cilantro, if using.
- **Do Ahead:** Beans can be made 3 months ahead. Transfer to an airtight container and freeze.