

MIKE'S SPICY PORK (BEEF, CHICKEN, WHATEVER) RICE

First off, you can make Mike's Spicy Rice with pork (my favourite) or beef or chicken. You can make it with stew meat or with ground pork or ground beef (which is how it began being made, twenty-some years ago).

This is more of a sketch than a finished painting, recipe-wise, since i just make it by experience and by eye. I really need to actually write down how much of what goes in ,next time.

Ingredient list for the last full batch i made

- 3 pounds boneless pork, cut into (half-inch or so) small chunks (or beef or chicken or ground beef or pork - very adaptable dish)
- 12 oz package bacon (our local grocery carries a brand that packages the scraps and ends left after they finish slicing sides of bacon to use in cooking)
- 2 16-ounce or one 24-ounce bottles salsa (how hot is up to you - if you're making it with chicken, i recommend medium rather than hot)
- Ro-Tel diced tomatoes with chilies (or equivalent - there's a near-perfect duplicate sold under the "Best Choice" name {available at Piggly Wiggly stores, among others}, that costs about 20% less)
 - one can hot
 - one can with lime and cilantro
 - one or two habañero peppers (or more if you insist)
- dried chilies japones (or anchos - i think the japones taste better)
- garlic
- 1 can chicken broth

Implements of Destruction

- a large skillet - cast iron would be fine, if you're the kind with the patience to maintain cast iron. (The cast iron in this household belongs to my stepdaughter, and i am forbidden to use it for this)
- a big pot with a tightly-fitting lid
- (i use a le Creuset dutch oven - five quarts or so. About the smallest you can get away with following this recipe)
- kitchen shears
- assorted spoons, spatulas, whatever.

Now, personally, i'd make the first batch or so fairly conservatively, then raise the heat level on future batches till you hit your perfect sweet spot. Again, i'm describing what i just did - this "recipe" is descriptive, not prescriptive...

Preparation

Cut your meat into small chunks - maybe 1/2 to 3/4 inch. (I use kitchen shears)

With the kitchen shears, cut the bacon into 1/4 to 1/2 inch wide strips, cutting across the slices

Finely mince one or two habañeros

*And i mean **FINELY**. You do NOT want chunks of habañero in the final product. Also, DON'T touch the chopped habañeros with your bare fingers, and DO wash your hands before your fingers get anywhere near your face.*

*{**Especiall**y your eyes}*

Trust me on this one; you'll thank me.

Toss the habañeros, the salsa, the cans of Ro-Tel and a clove or two of garlic, peeled and minced (or use store-bought minced garlic; allegedly something like 1/2 to 1 teaspoon per clove) into the big

pot, add the can of chicken broth and put it on a back or smaller stove burner on a medium to medium-high heat to come to a simmer.

I usually put everything but the broth in, then pour about half the broth into the salsa jar(s), put the lid on, and shake vigorously, then dump it all into the big pot.

When it boils, cover it, turn the heat down to a low simmer, and keep it hot while you do Other Things.

With the shears, cut up a bunch of the chilies japones. (I honestly have no idea how much - i do it by eye. I need to get a scale that weighs in grams to quantify this.)

So the answer to "How many?" is "enough"

Sorry.

Cut them into Very Narrow strips - a couple of millimeters wide - and cut on a sharp diagonal, which exposes more surface in the cooking process. I generally end up with something less than a quarter-cup or so. You are gonna use the peppers WITH the seeds.

Peel/mince several cloves of garlic if you're using fresh.

I generally melt a little butter in the skillet to start with (obviously, you could use margarine or even vegetable oil, but i grew up in the South), about two or three tablespoons, over medium-high heat (about the temp you'd use to cook bacon for breakfast)

Once your butter/marge/oil begins to sizzle a bit, toss in some of the sliced chiles (how much depends on how many batches you figure it's going to take to brown all the meat; you want some to divide it equally between the batches) and add a clove or so of minced garlic. Stir them 'round just a bit, then added the bacon strips.

Stir-fry the bacon till it's mostly cooked - not crisp, just pretty-well cooked. When it's done, transfer to the big pot, using a slotted spoon to leave the grease/fat in the skillet.

Unless you have one whacking big skillet, you're going to need to do the meat in batches.

Do the same to the other meat (pork, beef, chicken ...) - with a clove or so of garlic and a portion of the chopped chilies in each batch. Brown it thoroughly, but don't worry about fully cooking it - that's what the stewpot is for.

Transfer the meat to the big pot.

Once you've got all the meat browned and in the pot, transfer the pot to the main burner (if it's bigger than the one it's already on), and increase the heat to high. Bring it to a full boil, stirring occasionally.

IF YOU ARE USING PORK, and (depending on your personal germophobia levels) maybe if using chicken, at this point cover the pot, reduce heat to a low simmer, and simmer for at least fifteen or twenty minutes.

Even if you're using beef, it won't hurt.

ANYWAY.

Bring it back to a boil, and add one-and-a-half cups of rice.

Reduce to a simmer again, cover, and simmer until the rice is cooked to your taste, stirring occasionally.

Serve HOT.

Servings:

Unless you are a Commissary Services petty officer cooking for the crew of a Mexican PT boat (or have three or four friends and/or family members who like hot food) there WILL be leftovers.

Refrigerates very well, keeps for several days in the fridge, and usually winds up spicier the second or third day as the flavours continue to "marry".

I assume you could freeze it, but it never lasts long enough around here to be sure.