

Flavors of the Caribbean

Coconut Rum Punch

Squash Fritters with Spicy Citrus Dipping Sauce

Mofongo de Camarones

Chicken, Rice and Pigeon Pea Casserole

Grilled Jerk Fish with Pineapple Salsa

Mango Cheesecake with Lemon Syrup

Coconut Rum Punch

1 large can pineapple juice
1 12-ounce can pear nectar
1 12-ounce can guava nectar
½ can coconut milk
1 750ml bottle white rum
Lime Juice, to taste
Pineapple wedges, for garnish

1. Add juices to a large pitcher. Stir in coconut milk and rum. Add lime juice.
2. Serve over ice garnished with pineapple wedges.

Squash Fritters with Spicy Citrus Dipping Sauce

1 small zucchini, trimmed
2/3 cup yellow cornmeal
3 tablespoons all-purpose flour
¼ teaspoon salt
¼ teaspoon baking soda
Pinch of sugar
½ teaspoon salt
½ cup whole milk
1 large egg
1/3 cup vegetable oil

1. Grate the squash on the coarse side of a box grater. Squeeze out excess liquid and set aside.
2. Sift together cornmeal, flour, salt, baking soda, sugar and salt into a bowl. Whisk together milk and egg in another bowl, then add to dry ingredients and stir until just combined (do not overmix). Stir in squash.
3. Heat oil in skillet over moderate heat until hot but not smoking. Working in batches fry small spoonfuls of the batter, turning over once, until lightly browned, about 4 minutes total. Transfer to paper towels to drain; season with fine salt.

Mofongo de Camarones

2 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil
 3 large garlic cloves, peeled and crushed
 ¼ pound smoked ham, diced
 ¼ cup sliced scallions
 1 28-ounce can of tomato puree
 ½ cup chopped Manzanilla olives
 Juice of ½ a lime
 Cilantro
 Salt and pepper

1 tablespoon olive oil
 1 pound medium shrimp

Vegetable oil, for frying
 6 medium green plantains, peeled and sliced

1. Add oil to a saucepan and bring to medium heat. Add the garlic, ham and the scallions and cook until lightly browned. Add the tomatoes and simmer until flavors are combined. Add the olives and lime juice. Season with cilantro, salt and pepper. Keep warm.
2. Bring a skillet to medium-high heat and add the oil. Season shrimp with salt and pepper; add to pan and cook, turning once, until center is opaque. Remove shrimp from pan, roughly chop and add to a mixing bowl. Add a little tomato sauce and toss to combine. Set aside.
3. Add the vegetable oil to a heavy saucepan and heat until it reaches a temperature of 350 degrees. Fry the plantains until golden brown; drain on paper towels. Mash plantains in a mortar with a little of the tomato sauce. Season with salt and pepper.
4. Transfer some of the mashed plantains to a 2-inch ring mold. Add a layer of shrimp; top with more mashed plantains. Set on a plate, remove the mold and top with more sauce. Garnish with cilantro.

Chicken, Rice and Pigeon Pea Casserole

¼ cup olive oil
 1 pound boneless, skinless chicken thighs, cut into pieces
 1 small onion, diced
 1 red pepper, diced
 2 cloves garlic sliced
 1 teaspoon smoked paprika
 1-½ cups short grain rice
 ½ cup chopped tomatoes with juice
 3-½ cups chicken stock
 1 15-ounce can pigeon peas, rinsed and drained
 Salt and pepper

1. Preheat oven to 350 degrees.
2. Bring olive oil to medium-high heat in a large heavy sauté pan. Add the chicken and cook until nicely browned. Remove from pan with slotted spoon and set aside.
3. Add onion and red pepper to pan and cook until softened. Add the garlic and paprika and cook 1 minute more. Add the rice and cook until it turns translucent.
4. Add the tomatoes and stock and bring to a simmer. Add the reserved chicken and transfer to oven; cook until liquid is absorbed and the top is lightly browned.
5. Remove from oven, let stand five minutes. Stir in pigeon peas and serve.

Grilled Jerk Fish with Pineapple Salsa

4 6-ounce fish fillets
 Jerk sauce
 Olive oil

¼ cup finely diced red onion
 1 small jalapeno or Serrano pepper, seeded and minced
 ¼ cup finely diced red pepper
 1 cup diced fresh pineapple
 Lime juice, to taste
 Cilantro
 Salt and pepper

1. Place shrimp in a casserole dish. Add jerk sauce and turn to coat. Let stand 10 minutes.
2. Add onion, peppers and pineapple to a mixing bowl.
3. Season with lime juice, cilantro, salt and pepper. Set aside.
4. Preheat grill or grillpan to medium-high heat. Brush with oil.
5. Grill fish, turning once, until center is just cooked. Serve topped with salsa.

Mango Cheesecake with Lemon Syrup

Lemon Syrup
 ½ cup water
 ½ cup sugar
 Zest of 1 lemon
 ¼ cup fresh lemon juice
 1 fresh mango, peeled, pitted and diced

Crust
 1-½ cups graham cracker crumbs
 ½ cup sugar
 6 tablespoons (¾ stick) unsalted butter, melted

Filling
 1 cup pureed mangoes
 3 8-ounce packages cream cheese, room temperature
 1-¼ cups sugar
 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
 4 large eggs

1. Add water and sugar to a small saucepan. Bring to a simmer and cook until sugar is dissolved. Stir in the lemon zest, juice and diced mangos. Let cool to room temperature.
2. Preheat oven to 325°F. Lightly butter 9-inch springform pan. Stir cracker crumbs and sugar in medium bowl to blend. Add melted butter and stir until evenly moistened. Press crumb mixture firmly onto bottom of prepared pan. Bake until crust is set, about 12 minutes. Cool completely.
3. Beat cream cheese, sugar, and vanilla in large bowl until smooth. Add eggs 1 at a time, beating well after each addition. Add mango puree and beat until well blended. Pour filling over crust in pan.
4. Bake cake until set and puffed and golden around edges, about 1 hour 25 minutes. Cool cake 1 hour. Refrigerate uncovered overnight. Run small knife between cake and sides of pan to loosen. Remove pan sides. Transfer cake to platter. Cut into wedges and serve with mango sauce.