



Pelau is a one-pot rice dish and a great introduction to Trinidadian cooking. CHRIS DE LA ROSA OF CARIBBEANPOT.COM

A culinary journey to Trinidad and Tobago

Pelau. As the island celebrates its 50th year of independence, try one of its staple dishes

IZABELA SZYDLO
life@metronews.ca

When, in 2009, self-taught chef Chris De La Rosa launched his website, caribbeanpot.com, he wanted to create an archive of recipes from his native Trinidad and Tobago for his daughters.

A few years later, the site has grown into a hub for Caribbean cooking — spawning a YouTube channel and Facebook page. Recently, it was even picked up by two Caribbean TV stations for its own segment.

“There is much more to Caribbean cuisine than jerk chicken, roti and curry goat,” says De La Rosa, from Hamilton, Ont. “There is a vast array of food to be found from island

to island, depending on which country colonized it.”

Trinidadian Pelau is a great introduction. A one-pot rice dish, it is similar to Spanish Paella. “Pelau embodies the true multicultural and multi-ethnic spirit of Trinidad,” says De La Rosa. “With coconut milk and meat marinated in fresh herbs and spices, it is the ultimate rice dish.”

1. Clean chicken with citrus juice, rinse with water and drain. Season and marinate chicken in bowl with salt, Worcestershire sauce, ketchup, garlic, ginger, onion and tomato, cilantro, black pepper, scotch bonnet pepper, scallion, thyme for at least 2 hours.

2. Heat oil in large pot; add brown sugar. It will start to melt (keep stirring) then go frothy. When it turns amber, add chicken and stir well. Cover pot; cook on medium 10 mins.

De La Rosa's Tips

Find your way around a Caribbean kitchen.

- **Fresh.** Achieve authentic flavour with fresh herbs like thyme and cilantro.
- **Marinate.** A huge part of Caribbean cuisine is marinating meats and fish in fresh herbs and spices.

3. Rinse peas; wash rice. Remove pot lid and turn up heat to burn off any liquid. Pour rice into pot, then peas, carrots, coconut milk and water.

4. Stir and quickly bring back to boil. Cover pot and allow to simmer 35 minutes or until all liquid absorbed and rice is tender. Add teaspoon of butter.

5. Serve with slice of avocado, tomato and cucumber.

Ingredients

- 5 lbs chicken drumsticks
- Juice of lemon
- 1 tbsp salt
- 1 tsp each Worcestershire sauce and ketchup
- 2 cloves garlic (thinly sliced)
- 1 tsp grated ginger
- 1 each medium onion and tomato (chopped)
- 2 tbsp cilantro
- 1/2 tsp black pepper
- 1/4 scotch bonnet pepper
- 1 scallion (chopped)
- 3 sprigs fresh thyme
- 2 tbsp vegetable oil
- 1 heaping tbsp golden brown sugar
- 3 cups long grain brown rice
- 1 can pigeon peas
- 1 carrot sliced into coins
- 1 cup coconut milk
- 3 cups water
- 1 tsp butter (optional)

RECIPE COURTESY OF CHRIS DE LA ROSA OF CARIBBEANPOT.COM

Liquid Assets

Carnival in your glass



LIQUID ASSETS
Peter Rockwell
@therealwineguy
liquidassets@eastlink.ca

I'm not much of a beach person so my interest in Trinidad and Tobago was lacking until I saw Nicki Minaj's Pound the Alarm music video. Shot on the Caribbean archipelago (she's from Trinidad), its plot is basically Minaj, and a group of equally lovely ladies, celebrating Carnival.

Though a simple premise, I can't wait to learn more — starting with the food. A Caribbean spread is best described as eclectic, influenced by a wide array of international cuisine.

Curries, spices, creamy sauces, meats, rice, veggies and fruit are primary components of the islands' mains — which all equate to a wine pairing nightmare.

Of course, tropical island wine production is non-existent. That's why beer, a shot of local rum or a cocktail is the go-to beverage.

When you're filling your mouth with food loaded with pizzazz, you've got to reach for a refreshing wine with a palate-soothing personality.

It doesn't have to be complex. You may think of the 2011 Black Tower (\$8.95 - \$11.49) as a redundant German white from your parents' day. Made with the rivaner (a.k.a. müller-thurgau) grape, its juicy flavour and cool limited edition, summer-time bottle design have a T&T menu written all over them. **PRICES REFLECT THE RANGE ACROSS THE COUNTRY. SOME PRODUCTS MAY NOT BE AVAILABLE IN ALL PROVINCES.**



Pholourie. Trinidadian roadside fave makes a unique appetizer

“Pholourie, fried little balls of split pea flour, is a perfect appetizer, snack or side dish,” says Chris De La Rosa of caribbeanpot.com. “However, it is most passionately enjoyed as a quick meal from roadside vendors. The chutneys it is served with truly excite the taste buds.”

1. Crush garlic and scotch bonnet pepper to fine paste, add salt; set aside. In large bowl combine flour, baking powder, split peas powder and turmeric. Add garlic and pepper mix and water. Mix thoroughly to form lump-free batter. Allow to sit 30 mins.

2. In deep frying pan, add enough oil to deep fry, turn heat on medium to high. When oil is hot, use a tablespoon to scoop batter into the oil. Use a second spoon to scrape batter off of the original spoon. Don't worry if the first batch turns out deformed in shape, you'll get the hang of it.

3. Pholourie will double in size as it cooks. Using a fork, flip so both sides cook. When fully cooked, they will turn golden brown and float. Remove from oil and place on paper towels to absorb excess oil.

4. Serve warm, with mango chutney for which you can find a recipe, at caribbeanpot.com/a-simple-mango-chutney-

Ingredients

- 1 - 2 cloves garlic
- 1/4 scotch bonnet pepper
- 1 tsp salt
- 1 cup all-purpose flour
- 1 tsp baking powder
- 1 cup ground split peas (flour)
- 1 tsp turmeric
- 1 1/3 cups water
- Oil for deep frying

for-pholourie/

RECIPE COURTESY OF CHRIS DE LA ROSA OF CARIBBEANPOT.COM

1000 ISLANDS
SUMMER SPECIAL

HILL ISLAND RESORT • www.hillislandresort.ca

The Only Hotel in Canada on One of the 1000 Islands 3 Days 2 Nights Package from \$149.00
ppdn + taxes

Includes: 2 nights accommodation, 2 breakfasts, 2 dinners, and 2.5 Hour Boat Cruise on Gananoque Boat Line's Discover the "Lost Ships of 1000 Islands"

Reservations Call: 1-866-659-4459

3 LITERS

On the Web



Somewhere between a cake and a pudding, try Chris De La Rosa's recipe for Cassava Pone. Scan this code or visit metronews.ca/food