

## SPANISH TRADICIONAL GAZPACHO

*Gazpacho* is a typical cold soup from Andalucía in the South of the Spanish peninsula, it is a region rich in traditions with a strong cultural identity. *Gazpacho* has its origin there for two main reasons; the high temperatures that are often over 30°C and the fact that Andalusia is a profoundly agricultural region. In the summer, when tomatoes are ripe, peppers are juicy and the sun is scorching hot Andalusian farm workers would drink cold gazpacho to refresh themselves and to this day, the tradition of drinking gazpacho during the summer months remains! Nowadays you can find many different ways of making gazpacho, by adding cherries, strawberries, or beetroot... the possibilities are endless, you can tweak the ingredients to your taste, the freshness is guaranteed.

**Prep Time:** 15 minutes

**Cooking Time:** Zero!

**Total Time:** 15 minutes

### **Ingredients (for 4 to 6 people):**

(This recipe makes 4 full servings or 6 to 8 servings in a glass)

- 1 kg very ripe tomatoes, cut in quarters
- 1/2 ripe red bell pepper and 1/2 green bell pepper, deseeded and diced
- 1 medium cucumber, peeled and diced (I recommend to take out the seeds)
- 1 clove of garlic, peeled and crushed
- 3-6 Tbsp. extra virgin olive oil (to your taste)
- 4-6 Tbsp. sherry vinegar (to your taste)
- Salt
- ½ cup really cold water (or ice, if you don't have time to chill it)
- Garnish – optional

### **Preparation:**

Cut all the vegetables coarsely, to make the blender's work easier. Mix them all in a big bowl and process them in batches.

Blend until smooth, then add salt, pepper, vinegar, oil and really cold water and blend again. Pass this mixture through a fine sieve, then cover and refrigerate until chilled. If you don't have time to chill it, simply add the cold water and stir well. The best option in this case would be to add ice cubes instead of water.

**My tip!** If you can, cut and mix all the ingredients the day before, add the oil, vinegar, salt and pepper and cover. Let it chill in the fridge until you plan on eating it. You'll see that the flavor will increase and the freshness of the ingredients will be amazing! (Try not to eat this vegetable salad that you'll have in the fridge, for me, it's nearly impossible).

**Some more tips! ;)** If you're feeling creative, try to substitute the cucumber and mix in some watermelon, cherries, strawberries or even peaches! You can also add half of a granny smith apple to the mixture, or dice it and serve as a garnish. Oh! Garnishes make the difference, so, if you are looking to impress your guests or treat yourself, you can add diced black olives, hard-boiled eggs, small pieces of any ingredient in the gazpacho (peppers, cucumber or tomatoes), parsley or mint or even cubes of Spanish ham.

## SPANISH POTATO AND ONION OMELETTE

*Tortilla Española* or Spanish omelet is without a doubt one of the most commonly served dishes in Spain. It is also called *Tortilla de Patata* or Potato Omelet. Bars and cafés serve it as a *tapa* or appetizer, but it is often served as a light dinner in Spanish homes. As it's easy to transport, the Spanish make *bocadillos* or sandwiches by placing a piece between two pieces of a baguette. In Madrid, this *Bocadillo de tortilla* is really popular. As I told you during our cooking class at bcnKITCHEN, there are loads of variations for this tortilla, we cooked it the Catalan way (with quite a lot of caramelized onion), while the Madrid way is only potatoes.

**Prep Time:** 10 minutes

**Cooking Time:** 25 minutes

**Total Time:** 35 minutes

### **Ingredients (for 5 to 8 people):**

(This "*tortilla española*" makes 8-10 servings as an appetizer. It serves 5-6 as a main course)

- 6-7 medium potatoes, peeled
- 2 whole yellow onions (we used a sweeter Catalan variety)
- 5-6 large eggs (don't hesitate to add the egg whites like we did, if you have also cooked *crema catalana*)
- 2-3 cups of olive oil for pan frying
- Salt to taste

### **Preparation:**

Peel the potatoes and cut them in half lengthwise. Then, with the flat side on the cutting surface, cut again half lengthwise. Join the two halves and slice finely the potato. Make sure to separate the pieces that stick together. It is not necessary to slice the potatoes paper thin, and it is best not to use a food processor because it will slice the

potatoes too thin. If you slice them a bit thick, don't worry, it will simply take a bit longer for them to cook.

Peel and chop the onion into halves and slice them finely (julienne cut).

Deep-fry the potatoes into preheated frying oil (medium heat), until they are soft and golden. If the oil is too hot, the potatoes will brown rapidly on the outside, but still be raw on the inside. You'll know when they're done when you can poke a piece of potato with a knife and it easily breaks in two. Drain the excess oil into a bowl with a colander and you'll be able to reuse it when frying again.

In a large pan, caramelize the onion in around 2 Tbsp. oil. Remember not to add salt until the onion starts to caramelize, otherwise it would release the water from the onions and become mushy.

Break the eggs and whisk them. Add in onions and potatoes, mix with a wooden spoon or spatula and add a pinch of salt to the mixture.

Take a round, nonstick pan. We made it with a little one, but you can do it with a bigger pan if you're feeling brave enough and you have a bigger dish to flip it into. Coat the nonstick pan with oil and heat on medium-high heat, so the *tortilla* doesn't burn before it's cooked. Stir in a portion of the *tortilla* mixture and spread out evenly. Allow the egg to cook, and when you see that the omelet is set around the edges and the bottom, take the frying pan over the sink, and place a large plate (larger than the pan!), upside down over the pan. With your stronger arm (depending if you are right-handed or left-handed) take the pan, and flip it over with confidence whilst pressing the plate with your other hand. Go back to the stove and carefully slide the omelet from the dish to the pan, cooking the other side of our *tortilla*. Use the spatula to shape the sides of the omelet in round shape. Let it cook for 3-4 minutes. If you like your omelet undercooked (as I really love), take it off the hob as soon as it's cooked to your taste.

Carefully slide or flip the omelet onto the serving plate. To serve as a

main course, slice it into 6-8 pieces like a pie and if you find ripe and juicy tomatoes remember to serve the tortilla with the traditional bread with tomato.

If you are serving the *tortilla* as an appetizer, slice a baguette into ½ inch pieces. Cut the tortilla into 1.5" squares and place a piece on top of each slice of bread and secure with a toothpick or skewer.

**My tip!** We cooked our *Spanish omelet* the Catalan way, but you can try the Madrid way (just potatoes), or if you're feeling innovative, I recommend adding cream cheese, grated cheese (Parmesan is especially good), *chorizo*, *sobrassada* (the paprika and pork sausage with a creamy texture that I told you about), diced olives, fresh herbs (oregano or basil work really well!), and even spices.

## PAELLA DE MARISCO (SEAFOOD PAELLA)

*Paella de marisco*, known as *paella* by the tourists coming to Barcelona, is one of the most acclaimed dishes all around the city and the country. A rice-based dish, known worldwide and cooked all around Spain, *paella* was born as a way to use the fish and seafood in the villages near the sea. Every region in Spain has developed its own paella, cooked with the ingredients that they have on hand, being fish, seafood, meat, poultry and even game. Practice makes perfect! So now that you have learnt all the local secrets and tips, in no time you will master the art of a great paella!

**Prep Time:** 15 minutes

**Cooking Time:** 45 minutes

**Total Time:** 1 hour

### **Ingredients (for 4 to 6 people):**

(This recipe makes 4 full servings, but up to 6-8 medium servings. I've put some ingredients per person, so this way it's easier for you to calculate it)

- 1 raw extra-large shrimps per person
- 1 langoustine or crawfish per person
- 1/2 onions, chopped into small dices (optional)
- 1/2 red bell pepper, 1/2 green pepper chopped into small dices
- Around 4 or 5 saffron threads (remember colorant is forbidden!!)
- 2 teaspoons of Spanish paprika (optional)
- 2 cloves garlic, chopped finely
- 3 large tomatoes, grated (without the peel)
- 1 small squid or cuttlefish
- 0,800ml *Fumet* (fish/seafood broth)
- 0,320kg Bomba rice
- 2 mussels per person
- Olive oil, salt and pepper

My advice, is to have everything prepared beforehand: as you'll see paella is quite strict in timing and it will be easier if you have

everything prepared before starting. So, grate your tomatoes, cut your vegetables, prepare the squid, clean the mussels and measure everything before turning on the stove.

Heat the oil in a *paellera* (name for the *paella* pan) or in a large pan. Turn the heat to medium heat. Add in the onion (optional) and cook until well caramelized. Put in the red and green bell pepper. Let it caramelize (the more cooked they are, the sweeter and intense the flavor). When you have caramelized everything the ingredients are golden brown, add the garlic. Make a space in the center and add the cuttlefish it will be ready when it starts popping, add the "melsa", add the saffron and lastly the tomato letting it evaporate a little until it is like a paste.

At this point, start heating the *fumet* or fish broth, as you'll need it boiling hot when adding it to the rice. Preheat the oven to 350-375°F

Make space in the center again and add rice, coating it with some oil. Let it crisp for a while and when you have all the rice coated and browning, mix together with all the ingredients. Pour in the *fumet* (fish broth) and reduce heat to low, simmering and stirring occasionally). Continue cooking for about 10 minutes, until the liquid is nearly absorbed by the rice, but still you have some liquid remaining to cook in the oven. (The last 5 minutes in the oven are optional and if your pan or *paellera* doesn't fit in your oven you can skip this step and finish it off on the stove)

Transfer paella pan to the oven and cook, uncovered, about 5 minutes more, until almost all the liquid is absorbed. At this point, add the mussels (putting them into the rice as we did in bcnKITCHEN) and the shrimps and crawfish, making a circle around the paella.

When the mussels have opened, (it will take around 3 minutes), take the paella out of the oven.

Let it sit for 3 more minutes (as it will finish cooking), and serve.

Remember to always bring the paella to the table in its pan, to present it to your guests! As I told you, paella is traditionally eaten directly from the pan with a spoon, with all the guests sitting around and sharing it. Although you are not likely to serve it this way, do leave the paella pan at the center of the table so your family or guests can help themselves to more.

**My tip!** Make your fumet at home and freeze it by portions, you'll see it's easy, tasty, and you'll feel really proud of it! I recommend also making a big batch of the *sofrito* (name for all the caramelized vegetables). As I told you, it's the key factor in paella, and the step that takes longest to make. If one day you feel like cooking, make a big batch of *sofrito* and freeze it in portions, covered with oil. (If you cover it with oil, it will act as a protective layer, preventing water from entering your *sofrito* and avoiding crystallization when freezing).

## FISH BROTH

A great fish broth is the starting point for an outstanding paella but also for many other dishes like from the traditional “suquet de peix” to a fish soup or a flavorful risotto.

**Prep time:** 15 min

**Cooking time:** 45 min

**Total time:** 1 h

**Ingredients (for 5L of water):** (All the ingredients have been calculated based on the 5 L of water)

- 1 Kg fish spine (Always white fish, although angler fish is also great!)  
At bcnKITCHEN we used the shrimp and crayfish heads because they are easier to find in other countries, and they are part of your recipe. They also give our paella a lot of flavor!
- 2 Carrots
- 1 leek
- 2 Onions
- 3 Garlic cloves
- 3 Tbsp. Spanish paprika
- 250ml White wine

### **Preparation:**

Heat up your pot with some olive oil, and wait for this to be very hot. Add the fish/seafood and on a high setting caramelize them until they are golden. Chop your vegetables into cubes and add them to the pot, and cook them until they are golden. Add the Spanish paprika, but don't leave it long because it burns easily, 20 seconds is enough. Add the wine and deglaze the juices from the bottom of the pot. Remember if it's brown, great! If it's black not so much... Once the wine reduces a bit add the water. When it starts boiling, turn down the heat and let it simmer for about 45 min, scooping off the froth from the top with a slotted spoon. The froth on the top is caused by

the impurities of the fish, so make sure you remove it because it could make your fish broth turn bitter. Remember that the fish broth should never boil more than 45 minutes, fish can leak ammonium acid if overcooked.

Once it is cooked and off the stovetop, taste for salt.

Now you can strain your fish broth with a colander, you can use it all at once or freeze it in portions if you are making a big batch.

When using a frozen portion you can heat it up directly, no need to defrost, just try it once it has melted, and try it for taste before adding it to your dish.

**Tips!** If you are looking for a dark fish broth with loads of flavor, try our red fish broth recipe! The procedure is the same as the regular fish broth, but during the first step instead of fish we use crabs, or rockfish, when they become bright red we flamer with brandy to bring out the color even more, let it evaporate and follow the rest of the steps and adding 4 grated tomatoes. We crush the crabs so that they release their juices and carry on as normal. This fish broth is really tasty, you should try it!

## BREAD AND TOMATO (PA AMB TOMÀQUET)

One of the most classic dishes from Catalonia, and as simple as it gets! *Pa amb tomàquet* will cross your mind anytime you want to have a light, fast and tasty diner, just add some cheese or jamón serrano and dinner is served! If you find yourself with ripe tomatoes and crunchy bread, take a gastronomic trip to Catalonia and make the tastiest and simplest Catalanian culinary treasure.

**Prep Time:** 2 minutes

**No cooking time!**

**Total Time:** my record: 50"

### Ingredients:

- Toasted or fresh bread with a thick crust (some rustic bread like pa de pages will work perfectly)
- Ripe tomatoes (remember our *tomàquets de penjar*, "hanging tomatoes")
- Extra virgin olive oil
- Salt

### Preparation:

Rub the slice of bread with the tomato, which has been cut in half crosswise. Drizzle a bit of olive oil (or coat your bread in olive oil if it's fruity and aromatic) and then add a pinch of salt. You can also rub the bread with garlic before rubbing it with tomato.

**My tip!** Toast the bread, rub with tomato and eat it warm on the spot. I coat the bread in oil and add a really good sea salt (like Maldon sea crystals, for example). Try it! You'll see that the bread is still warm and really crispy, and the tomato and oil are even more aromatic this way.

## CREMA CATALANA

*Crema Catalana* or Catalan Cream is the Catalan name and version of the French dessert, crème brûlée. In fact, many regions claim to be the creators of this dessert although crema catalana is registered in Catalan cook books dating from the 11<sup>th</sup> century, and even the French admit that crema catalana is the real deal! Anyway, it's a really typical dessert from Catalonia, where it's tradition to eat one on St. Joseph's day (March 19th, the Catalan equivalent of Father's Day in the USA), and is typically eaten in the springtime.

**Prep Time:** 3 hours (cooling time included)

**Cooking Time:** 15 minutes

**Total Time:** 3 hours, 15 minutes

### **Ingredients (for 4 to 6 people):**

(This recipe makes 6 full servings in the traditional Catalan ramequins – which we used- but it may be up to 12 servings if you serve it in a small glass or cup)

### **Ingredients:**

- 1 cup sugar
- 6 egg yolks
- 1/2 cup cornstarch
- 1 stick cinnamon
- zest of 1 lemon and 1 orange
- 4 cups milk

### **Preparation:**

Pour in the milk in a pot, and simmer together with the orange and lemon zest and the cinnamon stick for about 15 minutes. Take off the hob and set aside. In a big bowl, crack the eggs and separate the whites from the yolks, we'll use only yolks. Dissolve the cornstarch in a bit of COLD milk and add to the mix. Add the sugar to the yolks and

beat, until you have a thick, smooth mixture and then add the cornstarch. Take out the cinnamon and zests from the milk and heat it up again. When nearly boiling, take off the hob and pour the milk into the egg bowl and stir constantly, to mix all together. Put back into the pot and cook it at medium heat, stirring all the time. Remember not to whisk and to NEVER stop stirring. Cook just until thickened, and, as soon as it thickens and you feel more resistance in your hand, or as soon as you see the path of the whisks in the *crema*, remove the pot from the heat immediately. Remember, we don't want scrambled eggs, so even if it's off of the heat, never, never stop stirring! (The texture of the *crema* should be smooth and creamy, so it's preferable to have it a little bit more liquid than too cooked). Serve in the ramequins, leave to chill and refrigerate.

Before serving, take out of the fridge, sprinkle sugar on top with a tablespoon and caramelize the sugar with a chef torch. Remember not to burn it (or it will become bitter) and to brown it evenly, because this way it will break like glass when tapping with the tablespoon. Serve immediately and enjoy the sound of the sugar breaking!

**My tip!** Remember you can add flavors to your *crema* after cooking it the most common being chocolate or coffee, but if you're feeling like experimenting, stir in some fruit puree, or even some matcha tea powder. In the summer time, I love to make this *crema* with a really fruity and fresh touch: just take the zest of 3 oranges, 3 lemons and 1 lime, and add it in the beginning with the cinnamon. When cooked, add in two tablespoons of grated zest from half an orange, a lemon and a lime and stir. Let chill and broil, just like the normal procedure.