

One-Pot Spanish Smoky Rice with Chicken, Artichokes & Butter Beans

Smoky, savoury, pleasantly briny, and substantial enough for seven servings plus a little lunch-box insurance.

PREP 15 MIN / COOK 50-55 MIN / SERVES 7 GENEROUSLY

CHICKEN

- 8 boneless, skinless chicken thighs (about 2-2 1/2 lb)
- 1 tbsp extra-virgin olive oil
- 2 tsp smoked paprika
- 1 tsp dried oregano
- 1/2 tsp kosher salt, plus black pepper

RICE

- 2 tbsp extra-virgin olive oil
- 2 red bell peppers, diced
- 1 medium yellow onion or 2 leeks, diced
- 2 tbsp jarred minced garlic
- 3 tbsp tomato paste
- 2 tsp smoked paprika
- 1 1/2 tsp sweet paprika
- 1 1/2 tsp dried oregano
- 1/2 tsp ground cumin
- Pinch chili flakes (optional)
- 3 cups long-grain brown rice
- 1 can (28 oz / 796 mL) diced tomatoes
- 3 1/2 cups low-sodium broth
- 2 cans (19 oz / 540 mL each) butter beans, drained and rinsed
- 1 jar or can (14 oz / 398 mL) artichoke hearts, drained and quartered
- 3/4 cup pitted green olives, halved
- 1 tsp kosher salt, plus more to taste

TO FINISH

- 1 lemon, zest and juice
- 1/2 cup chopped fresh parsley
- 1/2 cup crumbled feta (optional)
- Plain Greek yogurt (optional)

The Method

Warmth in the pot, strength at the table.

1. Season the chicken. Toss the 8 chicken thighs with 1 tbsp olive oil, 2 tsp smoked paprika, 1 tsp oregano, 1/2 tsp salt, and several grinds of black pepper.
2. Brown it. Heat a large Dutch oven over medium-high. Brown the chicken for about 3 minutes per side, then transfer it to a clean plate. It will finish cooking with the rice.
3. Build the base. Lower the heat to medium. Add 2 tbsp olive oil, the diced peppers, and the onion or leeks. Cook 5-6 minutes, stirring occasionally, until softened.
4. Wake up the flavour. Add 2 tbsp garlic, 3 tbsp tomato paste, 2 tsp smoked paprika, 1 1/2 tsp sweet paprika, 1 1/2 tsp oregano, 1/2 tsp cumin, and optional chili flakes. Cook 1 minute, stirring constantly.
5. Add rice and liquids. Stir in 3 cups brown rice and toast for 1 minute. Add the diced tomatoes, 3 1/2 cups broth, and 1 tsp salt. Scrape the bottom thoroughly.
6. Arrange the proteins. Stir in both cans of butter beans. Place the browned chicken together on one side of the pot, leaving a visibly chicken-free side for easy serving.
7. Simmer gently. Bring to a gentle boil, reduce the heat to low, cover tightly, and simmer for 35 minutes. Resist opening the lid; the rice is performing private kitchen sorcery.
8. Add the briny things. Quickly scatter in the artichoke hearts and 3/4 cup olives. Re-cover and cook another 10-15 minutes, until the rice is tender and the chicken reaches 165 F / 74 C.
9. Rest and brighten. Remove from heat and rest, covered, for 10 minutes. Remove the chicken, then stir in the lemon zest, lemon juice, and 1/2 cup parsley. Adjust salt and pepper.
10. Serve. Spoon out the butter-bean rice first, then serve the remaining rice with chicken. Finish with feta or Greek yogurt, if desired.

Rice rescue charm: If the rice is wet, rest it uncovered. If it is firm and the pot is dry, add 1/2 cup hot broth, cover, and cook 5-10 minutes longer. Brown rice can be a temperamental little woodland goblin.