



FRANK STITT'S SOUTHERN TABLE

RECIPES AND GRACIOUS TRADITIONS
FROM HIGHLAND'S BAR AND GRILL

FOREWORD BY PAT CONROY



LOWCOUNTRY RED RICE
SERVES 6 AS A SIDE DISH

From the North Carolina border all the way down to the Florida state line, almost every old-time southern family along the coast serves red rice—red because of the tomato broth in which the rice is cooked. This flavorful rice is packed with tomatoes, bacon, onions, and peppers. (We use basmati rice for its distinctive nutty flavor.) Toss in a few shrimp, hot off the grill, and you've got a delicious meal.

- 2 cups peeled, seeded, and chopped tomatoes, with their juices**
(or substitute canned, reserving the liquid)
- ¼ pound bacon, cut into ½-inch-wide strips**
- 1 large onion, cut into ¼-inch dice**
- 1 large red bell pepper, cored, seeded, and cut into ¼-inch dice**
- 2 celery stalks, finely diced**
- Extra virgin olive oil if needed**
- 2 jalapeños, seeded and diced**
- 1 poblano or yellow bell pepper, cored, seeded, and diced**
- 2 bay leaves**
- 4 thyme sprigs**
- Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper to taste**
- 1¾ cups Chicken Broth (page 339) or canned low-sodium broth, or a combination of half chicken and half shrimp broth or bottled clam juice**
- 1 cup basmati rice**
- 4 scallions, thinly sliced**
- 1 small bunch basil or cilantro, leaves removed**
- ½ lemon**

If using fresh tomatoes, drain them in a sieve or colander set over a bowl to catch their juices; set the juices aside.

In a large Dutch oven, cook the bacon over medium heat until it is beginning to crisp. With a slotted spoon, transfer the bacon to paper towels to drain. Return the Dutch oven of drippings to the stove, add the onion, bell pepper, and celery and sauté until softened, about 10 minutes. (Add a little olive oil if the bacon fat seems insufficient.) Add the chile peppers, tomatoes, bay leaves, and thyme to the pot, season with salt and pepper, and simmer for about 10 minutes, until the chile peppers have softened.

Meanwhile, in a medium saucepan, combine the broth with a scant ¼ cup of the reserved tomato juices (discard any remaining juice) and add salt to taste. Bring to a simmer. Add the rice, return to a simmer, and stir a few times. Lower the heat to the lowest setting, cover, and cook until the rice is tender, about 16 minutes.

Add the rice to the vegetable mixture, along with the bacon, and taste for seasonings. Stir in the scallions, basil, and a big squeeze of lemon. Serve immediately.



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