



Nostalgic Delights: Food Recipes by CELAC Students

1. Mansaf from Jordan, contributed by Adel Alkassasbeh



Mansaf is a traditional and highly regarded dish in Jordanian and Palestinian cuisine, commonly served during special occasions and large gatherings. This hearty and rich meal consists of aromatic spices, lamb, rice, and yogurt.

To prepare mansaf, you will need the following ingredients:

- 1 kg of lamb (minced or in large pieces)
- 3 cups of basmati rice
- 2 medium-sized onions (chopped)
- 4 tablespoons of sheep's butter or vegetable butter
- Mansaf spices (available in Arab markets)
- Salt to taste
- Fresh yogurt

Here's how to make the dish:

Start by boiling water in a large pot and adding the rice. Rinse the rice thoroughly and drain it.

In another pot, heat the butter and sauté the chopped onions until they become translucent and golden.

Add the minced lamb or lamb chops to the onions and continue to cook until the meat softens and changes color. Stir in the Mansaf spices and salt to enhance the flavors of the dish.

Pour hot water over the meat and let it simmer over medium heat until the meat becomes tender, and the broth thickens and becomes delicious. Skim off any foam that forms on the surface while cooking.

Once the meat is fully cooked, strain the soup and set it aside.

In a separate pot, cook the rice using the drained meat soup, following the instructions on the rice package. Cooking the rice on low heat until it absorbs all the liquid is recommended.

Before serving, place the fresh yogurt in a separate bowl.

On the main serving plate, arrange the cooked rice, and then place the tender meat on top.

Just before eating, pour the fresh yogurt over the rice and meat. Optionally, you can add some of the reserved soup to add more moisture and flavor.

Mansaf is best enjoyed when accompanied by popular Arabic appetizers like salads and pickles. This delightful dish brings people together and holds a special place in the hearts of those who cherish the Jordanian and Palestinian culinary traditions.



2. Arepas from Venezuela , contributed by Ana Gabriela Diaz



The arepa is one of the most beloved and traditional foods in Venezuela, cherished for its popularity and affordability. It is deeply connected to the country's culture and identity. If you're attempting to prepare arepas for the first time, having a recipe is essential as it provides detailed instructions on the process. In this essay, I will guide you through four easy steps to make delicious arepas.

Firstly, the recipe calls for four simple ingredients: salt, water, cooking oil, and harina pan. Harina pan is a special pre-cooked corn flour that can be found in markets like Walmart or Smith.

Secondly, once you have gathered all the ingredients, the process is straightforward. Dissolve salt in water, then gradually add harina pan until a homogeneous dough forms. You can use your hands for this step.

Next, take the dough and divide it into portions, shaping each portion into a ball. Flatten the balls to create discs, forming the arepas. Afterward, coat a pan with oil and heat it. Place the arepas in the pan to fry.

Lastly, to ensure that the arepas are thoroughly cooked inside, transfer them to an oven preheated to 350 degrees Fahrenheit for about 10 minutes. Once ready, you can fill the arepas with cheese, eggs, meat, or any other ingredients according to your preferences.

Arepas are my favorite dish because of their incredible versatility, making them suitable for breakfast, lunch, or dinner. These delightful treats are now available in numerous places around the world, which fills me with joy and pride in my heritage.



3. Nauryz from Kazakhstan, contributed by Yeldana Yerzhan



In Kazakhstan, we have the unique tradition of celebrating New Year twice a year: on the 31st of December, which is the last day of the year, and on the 22nd of March, known as "Nauryz." The Nauryz celebration holds significance for Turkic people, and since Kazakh people are Turkic, it has become an important holiday for us too. Nauryz falls between the 21st and 23rd of March, following the solar calendar, and we join together with everyone on the 22nd of March to celebrate this grand occasion.

Preparations for the holiday start about a week in advance, with special attention given to the main dish on the table, known as "Nauryz kozhe" or "New Year Soup" in English. During these festive days, relatives, close friends, and people come together at a "dastarkhan," a large table filled with various foods and treats, where Nauryz kozhe takes the central place. This dish is not only delicious and flavorful but also healthy, as it consists of seven essential components that form the basis of the recipe.

The number "7" holds special significance and sacredness for Kazakh people, as ancient legends speak of a man considered a "dzhigit" if he possesses seven treasures: bravery (strong personality), a beautiful wife, wisdom and knowledge, a fast horse, a golden eagle with excellent hunting skills, weapons for hunting, and a Kazakh greyhound. To honor this legend, we use seven specific ingredients in Nauryz kozhe.

These components carry individual meanings, and we adhere to using only them, though some variations might occur based on personal preferences. For the main dish, we utilize water, salt, flour (optional), kefir, kurt (a dry product made from sour milk), grains (such as millet, rice, or pearl barley), horse meat (though beef or lamb can also be used), and kazy (a sausage made from horse meat).

Preparing Nauryz kozhe for 8 servings takes approximately 4 hours. Here are the step-by-step directions:

Step 1: Prepare the broth for kozhe. Place 400 grams of horse meat, 2 teaspoons of salt, and one medium onion (optional) into a pan and fill it with 3 liters of water. As the meat cooks, remove any foam to ensure a clear broth. Cook the horse meat for about 3 to 3:30 hours on maximum heat (or reduce to medium once the water boils) until it becomes tender and slightly overboiled.

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Step 2: Prepare kazy for kozhe. Place 300-400 grams of kazy (horse sausage) into another pan and cook it over medium heat for about 2 hours. To check if it's done, use a toothpick and insert it gently into the kazy; if it goes in easily, it is ready. Then, remove the sausage from the pan and cut it into small or medium pieces.

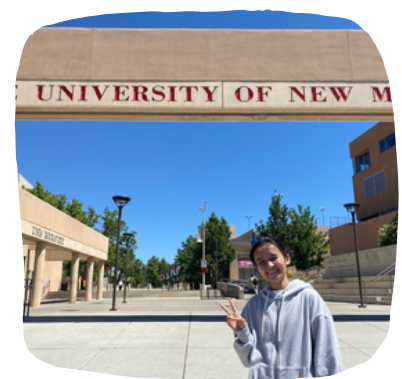
Step 3: Thoroughly rinse all the grains (each weighing 50-60 grams) you intend to use. Cook millet and other grains separately in different pots, removing them from heat just before they are fully cooked. Some recipes use seven grains, such as barley, buckwheat, corn, etc.

Step 4: Before adding the grains to the broth, soften the kurt in the broth and allow it to absorb the flavors. For this, take two mugs of broth (200-300 milliliters) and add the kurt, along with 1 teaspoon of black pepper and minced 1-2 cloves of garlic. Mix the ingredients and let them sit for 1-2 hours.

Step 5: Remove the boiled horse meat from the pan and slice it. Then, combine the broth (without meat) with the slightly cooked grains. Add the chopped kazy to the soup along with the grains.

Step 6: After three hours, place the pan on low heat and pour in the softened kurt, grains, and kazy mixture. Add 1 liter of kefir and mix the soup thoroughly.

Step 7: Five minutes before serving, add the sliced horse meat to the soup. Enjoy your delicious Nauryz kozhe and have a Happy New Year!



4. Chilaquiles Verdes from Mexico, contributed by Eunice Carrasco Lucero



Chilaquiles Verdes is a traditional Mexican recipe that enchants mornings in Mexico with its authentic flavor and rich tomatillo sauce. It's a dish cherished by Mexicans, who often enjoy it with family and friends on weekend mornings, making it a unifying culinary experience.

To prepare Chilaquiles Verdes, you will need corn tortillas, tomatillos, cilantro, garlic, salt, jalapenos, chicken, and optional toppings like cream and cheese.

Begin by frying the tortillas to enhance their flavor and allow the sauce to cling better. Stack the tortillas and cut them into eighths, forming triangular shapes. Fry them gently in a large frying pan with oil until they become crispy.

Next, prepare the green sauce by boiling the tomatillos, jalapenos, and onion in water until they soften. Blend them together with the rest of the salsa ingredients until you get a smooth sauce. Set it aside for later use.

In a separate saucepan, cook the chicken with 2 cups of water and salt over low heat until it becomes tender. Turn off the fire and let it rest for about 15 minutes, then shred the chicken.

Now, take a large skillet and pour in the green salsa. Add the fried tortillas and shredded chicken to the skillet. For the final touch, you can top it with cheese and cream according to your preference.

Your Chilaquiles Verdes are now ready to be served. They can be accompanied by additional cream and onions if desired. I hope you enjoy these Chilaquiles Verdes as much as I do. Remember, the most important aspect of this dish is sharing it with someone else.



5. Pachamanca from Peru, contributed by Wuilmer Garcia Quispe



The word "pachamanca" is a typical Peruvian dish with roots dating back to the Inca culture. It originates from the Quechua language, where "pacha" means earth and "manka" means pot, combining to form "earth pot." Traditionally, the main ingredients for pachamanca in the Tahuantinsuyo culture were lamb, alpaca, beef, various types of tubers, and aromatic herbs. These herbs were added to absorb strong odors from the meat products.

Traditionally, pachamanca was cooked in the earth for hours using hot stones. However, if you don't have access to an open hole in the ground, you can make it in a pot.

Here is how to cook pachamanca in a pot:

Ingredients:

- ½ kilogram of pork belly
- ½ kilogram of chicken
- ½ kilogram of beef (strip roast)
- 1 cup of chicha de jora (a type of corn beer)
- ½ cup of dark beer
- 30 milliliters of red vinegar
- ½ cup of aji panca paste (a type of chili paste)
- 2 whole yellow peppers
- 6 garlic cloves
- 4 branches of chincho (a type of herb)
- 4 branches of huacatay (Peruvian black mint)
- 4 coriander sprigs
- 3 muña branches (a type of Andean herb)
- 2 sprigs of mint
- 1 pinch of salt
- 1 pinch of cumin
- 1 pinch of black pepper
- 3 purple sweet potatoes
- 3 medium white potatoes
- 3 ears of corn

Step-by-step preparation:

5. Pachamanca from Peru, contributed by Wuilmer Garcia Quispe

In a glass or metal container, combine the liquid ingredients: black beer, chicha de jora, and red vinegar.

In a blender, add the aromatic herbs (huacatay, chincho, muña, mint, and coriander) along with the aji panca paste and yellow peppers. Blend until the ingredients form a smooth mixture, then add the garlic cloves.

Place all the meat from the ingredient list into a container and pour the blended mixture over it. Cover the container with plastic wrap and refrigerate for approximately 24 hours.

Wash the tubers (potatoes and sweet potatoes) thoroughly with water.

After 24 hours, place all the marinated meat at the base of a large pot. On top of the meat, add the tubers (potatoes and sweet potatoes), followed by the whole corn and broad beans. Pour in the remaining liquid from the marinating container.

Cover the preparation with the aromatic herbs and cook all the ingredients over medium heat for about 1 hour and 30 minutes.

After the cooking time, remove the aromatic herbs, and with the help of tongs, serve each dish.

Enjoy your flavorful and traditional Peruvian pachamanca, a dish that brings together the essence of Peruvian culture and flavors.



6. Doro wat(chicken) from Eritrea, contributed by Habtom Samuel



Doro Wat is a delicious and spicy Eritrean chicken stew, known for its rich and flavorful taste. Here's a step-by-step guide to making this traditional dish:

Ingredients:

2 pounds of chicken, cut into pieces (traditionally, chicken legs and thighs are used)
 2 large onions, finely chopped
 4 cloves of garlic, minced
 1 tablespoon of grated ginger
 2 tablespoons of Berbere spice blend (available in Eritrean or African stores, or you can make your own)

1 teaspoon of paprika
 1/2 teaspoon of ground cardamom
 1/2 teaspoon of ground cumin
 1/4 teaspoon of ground cinnamon
 1/4 teaspoon of ground cloves
 1/4 teaspoon of ground nutmeg
 1 cup of chicken broth
 2 tablespoons of clarified butter (ghee) or vegetable oil
 Salt to taste
 Freshly ground black pepper
 Hard-boiled eggs (optional)
 Injera (traditional Eritrean flatbread) or rice, for serving

Instructions:

In a large pot, heat the clarified butter or vegetable oil over medium heat. Add the chopped onions and cook until they become soft and translucent, which should take about 5 minutes.

Add the minced garlic and grated ginger to the pot, and continue to cook for another 2 minutes, stirring frequently.

In a small bowl, mix together the Berbere spice blend, paprika, cardamom, cumin, cinnamon, cloves, and nutmeg. Add this spice mixture to the pot, stirring well to coat the onions, garlic, and ginger with the flavorful spices.

Place the chicken pieces into the pot and cook them until they are browned on all sides, which should take around 5-7 minutes.

Pour in the chicken broth, and season the stew with salt and freshly ground black pepper. Stir well to ensure the chicken is fully coated with the aromatic spice mixture.

Reduce the heat to low, cover the pot, and let the stew simmer for approximately 45 minutes to 1 hour. During this time, check the chicken occasionally, and add more chicken broth or water if needed to maintain the desired consistency.

6. Doro wat(chicken) from Eritrea, contributed by Habtom Samuel

If you like, you can add hard-boiled eggs to the stew during the last 15 minutes of cooking. This is a traditional addition to Doro Wat and enhances the flavor of the dish.

Before serving, taste the stew and adjust the seasoning as necessary. You can add more Berbere spice for extra heat, or adjust the salt and pepper to suit your preference.

Serve the Doro Wat hot with injera or rice. Injera, the traditional Eritrean flatbread, is commonly used as a utensil in Eritrean cuisine. Tear off pieces of injera and use them to scoop up the delicious and flavorful stew.

Enjoy the rich and complex taste of Doro Wat, with its spicy, savory, and aromatic notes, along with the tender and flavorful chicken pieces. It's a truly satisfying and traditional Eritrean dish that brings delight to any mealtime.



7. Brandade de morue from France, contributed by Alan Obami



Brandade is a delightful emulsion made with salt cod, olive oil, and typically potatoes. It is commonly enjoyed during the winter, paired with bread or potatoes. In French, it is known as "brandade de morue," while in Spanish, it is called "brandada de bacalao," both referring to salt cod. This delectable dish is a specialty of the Roussillon, Languedoc, and Provence regions in Occitanie (present-day France), as well as Catalonia, the Balearic Islands, and Valencia in Eastern Spain.

I truly miss this place and its cuisine, as it's challenging to find brandade as delicious as the one found in France when I'm in the United States.

Ingredients:

- 1 pound skinless salt cod fillet
- 1 pound large red-skinned potatoes
- 1 1/2 cups whole milk
- 8 large garlic cloves, peeled
- 1 teaspoon finely grated lemon zest
- 2 tablespoons fresh lemon juice
- 1/8 teaspoon cayenne pepper
- 3/4 cup extra-virgin olive oil, plus more for the baking dish
- Freshly ground black pepper
- 2 tablespoons freshly grated Parmigiano-Reggiano cheese
- 2 baguettes, cut into rounds and toasted, for serving

Directions:

Start by placing the salt cod in a bowl and covering it with 1 inch of cold water. Refrigerate it for 24 hours, changing the water four times during this period.

In a large saucepan, boil the potatoes in water over moderately high heat until they become tender, which should take around 30 minutes. Drain the potatoes and allow them to cool to warm.

7. Brandade de morue from France, contributed by Alan Obami

Meanwhile, drain the soaked salt cod and transfer it to a saucepan. Add 2 quarts of water and bring it to a boil. Drain and rinse the cod, then return it to the pan and add 4 cups of water. Bring it to a boil, and then simmer over low heat for 5 minutes. Drain the cod once again, and this time return it to the pan, along with the milk and garlic. Bring it to a boil, cover, and let it simmer for 10 minutes.

Peel the potatoes and break them into chunks. Transfer them to a food processor. Add the cooked cod, milk, garlic cloves, lemon zest, lemon juice, and cayenne pepper. Process the mixture until it becomes smooth. While the machine is running, slowly pour in the 3/4 cup of olive oil until everything is well incorporated. Season with black pepper to taste.

Preheat the oven to 400°F. Lightly oil a 9-by-13-inch baking dish and spread the brandade evenly in it. Sprinkle the grated Parmigiano-Reggiano cheese on top. Bake the dish on the top shelf of the oven for 20 minutes or until it turns golden brown. Serve the brandade with toasted baguette rounds.

Enjoy this delightful and flavorful brandade, and savor the taste of a traditional dish from the regions of France and Spain.

