



Slightly Spiced Dirty Rice

By Erin Fletter

Prep Time 5 / Cook Time 20 / Serves 4 - 6

Equipment

- Saucepan + lid
- Dry measuring cup
- Liquid measuring cup
- Measuring spoons
- Wooden spoon
- Fork

Ingredients

Slightly Spiced Dirty Rice

- Creole Spice Mix (if not already made):
 - 1 dried bay leaves (crushed—by hand is okay!)
 - 1/4 tsp mild paprika
 - 1/4 tsp Italian seasoning (or any blend of basil, thyme, and oregano)
 - 1/4 tsp onion powder (or garlic powder)
 - 1 tiny pinch cayenne pepper
 - 1 tiny pinch nutmeg
- Dirty Rice:
 - 3/4 C dried white rice
 - 1 pinch salt

- 1 pinch sugar
- 1 pinch ground cardamom
- 1 T Creole Spice Mix (see above)
- 2 T butter ******(for DAIRY ALLERGY sub olive oil)******

Food Allergen Substitutions

Slightly Spiced Dirty Rice

DAIRY: Substitute olive oil for butter in Dirty Rice.

Instructions

Slightly Spiced Dirty Rice

measure + mix

If you didn't already make the Creole Spice Mix for Southern Creole Okra "Gumbo" (see recipe), measure and mix 1/4 teaspoon of your choice of the following spices to make 1 tablespoon total of the spice mix: **1 crushed bay leaves, 1/4 tsp paprika, 1/4 tsp Italian seasoning, 1/4 tsp onion powder, 1 tiny pinch of cayenne pepper**, and **1 tiny pinch of nutmeg**.

measure + combine + boil

Measure and combine **3/4 cup white rice** with **1 1/2 cup of water** in a saucepan with a lid. Add **1 pinch of salt, 1 pinch of sugar, 1 pinch of cardamom**, and **1 tablespoon of Creole Spice Mix**. Bring to a boil.

simmer + fluff + stir

Once rice and water have come to a boil, reduce heat to a simmer and cover. Let simmer for 15 to 20 minutes until water has evaporated and cooked the rice. Use a fork to fluff the rice, then stir in **2 tablespoons of butter**. Serve a small scoop of Slightly Spiced Dirty Rice on top of each bowl of Southern Creole Okra Gumbo!

Featured Ingredient: Spices!

Hi there!

"Let's see if you can guess who I am. I'm a small but essential ingredient in dishes; I come in many types and forms; I might be very colorful or dull and extremely hot or subtle; plus, I'm almost never left out of a dish, at least a good tasting dish! Have you guessed yet? I'm Spice! You might use just one or several of us in a recipe! What's your favorite spice? Is it cinnamon, cloves, or ginger? Perhaps you are very daring and

like to add ground cayenne pepper or even Carolina reaper pepper (the hottest!) to your food. I hope you'll give many of us a try. You never know; you just might discover a new favorite!"

History

A spice is a seed, fruit, root, bark, or another part of a plant primarily used to flavor, color, or preserve food. Herbs differ from spices as they are a plant's leaves, flowers, or stems. Herbs are mainly used to flavor or garnish a dish. Some spices may also be herbs, depending on which parts of the plant are used. One example is Coriander. And, although Garlic is botanically a vegetable, it can be used as a spice or herb!

The stories and histories of the spices you see in the grocery store now are rich and span thousands and thousands of years across the world.

Spices were considered extremely valuable in ancient times, even more than gold (especially cinnamon, cloves, and black pepper). Now, spices are widely available and cost a small fraction of what they used to. Saffron is considered the most expensive spice.

The Spice Trade happened between ancient civilizations of Asia, Northeast Africa, and Europe.

During the ancient Roman Empire, trading largely came from Arabia. Traders supplied cassia, cinnamon, and other spices and purposely kept their sources a secret. This allowed the Arabians to remain the sole traders, and they could control the price, keeping them expensive.

Traders continued to keep their spices' origins secret for several centuries from both Ancient Greek and Ancient Roman civilizations. Finally, in the first century, Pliny the Elder, a Roman scholar, discovered their secret.

Later, during the Middle Ages, Europeans used spices on their food to show off their wealth since spices were still costly at that time. For example, a pound of saffron cost the same as a horse, a pound of ginger was as much as a sheep, and two pounds of mace as much as a cow!

The discovery of spices led to exploration along the Spice Route. Europeans were searching for a water route to reach the Spice Islands, the only place where spices were grown at the time. This journey led to the European colonization of India, Indonesia, and other countries of the eastern hemisphere.

Spices are important to food because they preserve it, add nutrition, flavor, and color, and tie a recipe to a particular part of the world. For example, cumin is often used in Indian but not Italian food. Likewise, oregano is often used in Greek, Italian, and Mexican food but not Thai food.

Peppercorns have been used as a spice for over 4,000 years!

Stories suggest that Chinese courtiers in the third century BCE carried cloves in their mouths to keep their breath sweet when talking with the emperor.

Indians have used spices and herbs for thousands of years for cooking and medicine.

Spices native to India were grown as early as the eighth century BCE in the gardens of Babylon.

The United States entered the Spice Trade toward the end of the 1700s. They traded salmon, codfish, tobacco, flour, soap, candles, butter, cheese, and beef for spices like pepper, cloves, cinnamon, and ginger.

Nutrition

Not only do spices help food taste amazing, but they also have astounding health benefits. For example: Cinnamon lowers blood sugar, and Ginger helps calm upset stomachs.

Turmeric helps the heart stay healthy and protects our brain from losing memory.

Black pepper aids in digestion so that our body can eat all the vitamins it needs from the food we eat.

Cumin can help with digestion and calm upset stomachs. It's also good for the heart!

Paprika has nutrients that are good for the eyes, and Chili powder benefits the brain!

Coriander helps the body get rid of toxic agents, and Cardamom helps fight inflammation.

Garlic is great for the heart and the immune system, and it helps prevent the flu!