

Nigerian jollof rice with fried plantain (dodo) and grilled chicken for Christmas!

Nigeria is an African country which is extremely rich in cultural diversity. With over two hundred different ethnic groups and local languages, one can easily imagine the variety of dishes that emerge from such a country.

Every ethnic group has a few special meals but there is one meal which brings the entire nation together especially during Christmas. We call it 'Nigerian Jollof Rice'. Several African countries have their own style of Jollof rice but Nigerian jollof is very special in its own way. For a complete experience, this meal is served with fried ripe plantain (popularly known as 'dodo' in western Nigeria), and fried chicken or turkey.

Here, I will explain the process of preparing the Nigerian jollof rice with dodo and grilled chicken.

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Recipe



Ingredients (for four servings)

Rice

- 1kg of rice
- 1 large onion (diced)
- 200 ml of sunflower oil or vegetable oil
- 4-5 medium-sized fresh plum tomatoes
- 2 large bell peppers
- 200g of tomato paste
- 5-8 pieces of fresh Pepper or 1 tablespoon of dried, ground pepper
- 2 seasoning cubes
- 1 tablespoon of curry powder
- 1 teaspoon of dried thyme leaves
- 2 dried bay leaves
- 1 teaspoon of rosemary leaves (optional)
- 1 teaspoon of turmeric powder (optional)
- 2 teaspoons unsalted butter (optional)
- Salt to taste

Chicken

- 1 kg of chicken
- 1 large onion (diced)
- 1 teaspoon of ginger and garlic paste
- 2 seasoning cubes
- 1 tablespoon of dried, ground pepper
- 1 teaspoon of curry powder
- ½ teaspoon of dried thyme leaves
- ½ teaspoon of rosemary leaves (optional)
- ½ teaspoon of turmeric powder (optional)
- Salt to taste

Plantain

- 4 ripe plantains (peeled and diced or sliced)
- 400 ml of sunflower oil or vegetable oil (depending on the size of the pan)

Directions

- **Step 1:** Place the chicken in a pot of water over medium heat. Add the diced onions, ginger and garlic paste, crushed seasoning cubes, dried pepper, curry powder, dried thyme leaves, and all the other optional ingredients of available. Then add salt to taste. Mix well and leave to cook for 15-20minutes.
- **Step 2:** Transfer the chicken into a preheated oven (about 150-200 degrees Celsius) and leave to bake for about 30minutes. Strain the liquid from the cooked chicken through a fine-mesh sieve. Keep the liquid and discard the solids.
- **Step 3:** Blend the fresh tomatoes, fresh pepper, bell pepper and some onions together in a blender to make a paste. Pour the paste into a pot and boil for about 10-15 minutes until a thick paste is formed.
- **Step 4:** In a large pan or pot, heat 200ml of oil, add a pinch of salt and diced onions. Stir fry for 3-5minutes, then add the bay leaves, curry powder, dried thyme leaves, and the other optional ingredients if available. Mix well and add the blended paste from step 3 and the tomato paste. Stir-fry this mixture for about 10 minutes.
- **Step 5:** Add the liquid from the boiled chicken to the mixture above and leave to cook for about 2 minutes.
- **Step 6:** Per boil the rice for about 10 minutes and wash it. Then add the washed, per boiled rice to the mixture in step 5. Turn down the heat and cook on low heat for about 20-30minutes. If necessary, add more salt to taste. Then add the unsalted butter and stir.
- **Step 7:** Heat the sunflower/vegetable oil in a non-stick pan over medium heat. Add plantains and fry on both sides until golden-brown, about 2 to 3 minutes per side. Garnish the jollof rice with fried plantains and serve with chicken.

Enjoy this meal with a cold drink and some nice Christmas music as you celebrate Christmas with family and friends!