

# Paella

*I've had lots of hits and misses with this Spanish classic, adding ridiculous, overwhelming amounts of saffron to try getting it as yellow as it is in Spain. Then I found out the Spanish sometimes use colouring! So here at last is the Delia paella – easy, no fuss, and the good thing is it serves six people as a complete meal needing no accompaniment.*

## Serves 6

12 oz (350 g) Calasparra paella rice  
2 tablespoons olive oil  
1 x 3 lb (1.35 kg) Traditional Free Range chicken, jointed into 8 pieces (see page 98)  
1 large onion, peeled and roughly chopped  
1 red pepper, deseeded and roughly chopped into chunks  
4 oz (110 g) Spanish chorizo sausage in a piece, skin removed and cut into ½ inch (1 cm) dice  
2 cloves garlic, peeled and crushed  
1 heaped teaspoon paprika  
¼ teaspoon cayenne pepper  
½ teaspoon saffron strands (½ x 0.4 g sacht)  
8 oz (225 g) ripe red tomatoes, skinned and roughly diced  
2 pints (1.2 litres) boiling water  
12 raw tiger prawns, shell-on, defrosted if frozen, 4 with heads, 8 without  
2 oz (50 g) fresh or frozen shelled peas  
1 lemon, cut into wedges, to garnish  
salt and freshly milled black pepper

You will also need a shallow paella pan with a base diameter of 10 inches (25.5 cm), a top diameter of 13 inches (32.5 cm) and a capacity of 7 pints (4 litres).

Once you have peeled, chopped, prepared and assembled everything, heat the oil in the pan over a fairly high heat. Now season the chicken joints, adding 4 of them to the hot oil to sauté on all sides until golden brown, then remove them to a plate and do the same with the other 4 joints. Next add the onion, pepper and chorizo and fry these over a medium heat for 6-8 minutes, or until they're nicely tinged brown at the edges. Now add the garlic, paprika, cayenne and saffron and cook for another minute, then return the chicken to the pan, followed by the tomatoes, plenty of seasoning and the boiling water. Next bring everything up to a gentle simmer, turn the heat down and cook, uncovered, for 10 minutes.

After that, remove the chicken pieces and set them aside, then pour the rice into the centre of the pan. Bring everything back up to the boil, give a final stir and simmer, still uncovered, for about 10 minutes. During that time, shake the pan occasionally and move it around on the hob a little if the hob plate is not as big as the base of the pan. Next return the chicken, along with the prawns and peas, to the pan and continue to simmer for 15-20 minutes, or until the rice is cooked, adding a little more hot liquid if you think it's necessary. Now shake the pan again, making sure the rice is completely immersed. Turn the prawns over halfway through the cooking time – they will turn pink when cooked. The rice at the edges of the pan will take longest to cook, so to test that the paella is ready, take a little of the rice from the edges and check it's cooked through, then remove the pan from the heat and cover with a clean tea cloth for 5 minutes to absorb some of the steam. The paella is now ready – just garnish with the lemon wedges and don't forget to have hot plates ready to serve it on.

