

# My Way of Cooking

**Miami**

style

by ID

Sneak  
Preview  
Edition

...Recipes from my childhood memories...

# My Way of Cooking

**Miami**

style

by JD

Dedicated to the amazing women in my family who raised us on the incredible home made food they lovingly prepared for us every day of their lives...

To my Grandmother Nica, my Godmother Aida, my Tia Lila and my incredible, wonderful Mom, Luisita.

Thank you for all the love, delicious food and great childhood!

I love you all

For Preview only





Miami@Night2.10 - 30" x 40" © 2010

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Bicicleta - 24" x 36" © 2002

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# El contenido de mi cocina The contents of my kitchen...

Desayuno/ Breakfast

Sopas/Soups

Lo basico / The basics

La comida /Dinner Meals

Pescado y Mariscos/Fish Seafood

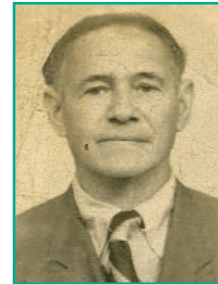
Carnes /Meat

Los Dulces / Deserts

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My earliest childhood memory is sitting at a little kitchen table with my Grandfather, Luis, my mom's Dad. My Grandmother Nica was a few feet away at the stove cooking breakfast for us like every other morning. The aroma of Cuban home cooking permeated the entire flat, that moment itself became a wonderful memory of my early life.

**W**y grandfather and I patiently awaited the eatable love that would soon reward our hungry morning stomachs. I remember that moment so vividly. It was our Bronx apartment in New York, I can still see the plastic on the living room furniture, the black and white television. Strangely, I remember the peep hole and the locks on the front door, and of course the fire escape, my window to the outside world, and the link to my grandmothers' best friend. She was a sweet Jewish lady that lived next door to us, sharing the fire escape on our floor. My Grandmother only spoke spanish, our neighbor, very little English being a native of another country. I was the official interpreter for those two. Yet, it always bothered me that I could not remember what we ate for breakfast that morning with my grandparents on that cool New York day. I remember everything else. I remember being at the table, the temperature of the room and the smell of home cooking, which I inherited the ability to recreate every once in a while at home. I love when my daughter walks into the room, nose up in the air asking, "what's for dinner dad?", but I'll get into that later. I loved my grandfather dearly and remember that morning so clearly because I felt big that day sitting at the table with my Grandpa. The only other guy in our home where my Mom and I lived with her Mom & Dad. I was very young at the time, my Grandfather died when I was only six years old. Still, I have always wondered why I could not remember what we ate that day. I seem to remember so much about it already, I should remember more. **Why can I not remember what we ate?**






W

hen I started to write this book is when I began to understand why I could not remember what we ate that day. It was so simple. it was because every day, at every meal, we ate amazingly delicious food. Every single day we had world class Cuban home cooking and never realized it because it was always great We knew had no clue how lucky we were.



My Grandmother Antonia, but everyone called her Ñica was the matriarch and made the most unbelievable food you could imagine. Everything, everyday she made was sensational. The soups, were spectacular, the stews, outrageous, the beef, chicken, fish, desserts, whatever the women in my family made was incredible, simply because it was something prepared with love for her children, friends and family. There were never any lessons or written recipes passed on to each other. However the flavors, the tastes seamlessly passed from one kitchen to the next, one generation to the next. All three of her daughters my mom Luisita, Godmother Aida, and the eldest, my Tia Lila all were amazing cooks.

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he intention of this book is to honor their lives and share a little bit of their love, using my artistic talents to create a beautiful tribute to all our beloved Cuban Mothers, and Mothers of every nationality, from all over the world who give us so much through the love they put into our every day meals. Their hearts poured into every dish, every day of their lives.

My desire to create this book is that we cook these meals for the ones we love, and pass my family's Miami flavors to our children, our culture, our world community. Through our foods, we preserve our histories through our individual cooking artistry we use to share our love with the world so that it will continue spread the foods that feeds the universes growth.

One meal at a time, one day at a time, **as our beloved Mothers fed us.**

Enjoy!

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# The Tools

**5** basic kitchen tools everyone needs to have to get the most out of this book

## **1. Electric Rice Cooker • 4 to 8 cup**

**R**ice is traditionally made with every Cuban meal. A quality rice cooker saves time, is easy to use and makes perfect rice every time. An absolute necessity in the Cuban-American kitchen. Directions are so easy. Clean rice and put equal parts rice and water in the rice cooker bowl. Add a tablespoon of salt and one tablespoon of corn, vegetable or canola oil. Stir, cover and press the start button. That is it! You are done. Now you can start concentrating on part two of your meal. To my family and to many Cuban-American Moms, the rice cooker is the greatest invention ever made.

*Healthy Tip:* I like to use whole grain white rice or brown rice instead of the traditional white rice that is used but that is simply a matter of preference.

## **2. A good frying pan or skillet set**

**A** 10" to 12" inches wide • 2 to 3" inches deep good multi purpose medium sized frying pan or a set can be one of the best investments a cook can make. As in any thing you work with, good tools will save you time, energy and money Good frying pans and skillets are a huge asset and necessary to make good home made Miami food.

## **3. A medium size stew pot**

**M**ulti purpose medium pot sets are another good thing to have. Fricassee, soups, even some desserts are made in the versatile tools. As in any thing you work with, good tools will save you time, energy and money. **Good pots are a must.**

# The Tools

5 basic kitchen tools everyone needs to have to get the most out of this book

**4. Pressure Cooker • 10 to 12 cup**  
Pressure cookers are another time saver that make creating great meals a snap. Quality products as always are safer which in the end save time is easy to use and the food comes out magnificent. Another absolute necessity in the Miamian kitchen.

*Healthy Tip:* Use extra virgin olive oil in salads, soups and stews to add great spanish flavor with the benefit of heart healthy oils.

**5. A Cuban coffee pot or espresso machine**  
1 to 12 cup simple pots to fancy machines

A good cup of coffee can make just about anything a little better. To make authentic cafe con Leche, cuban coffee must be freshly made to fully enjoy the cream goodness of the steamed milk. A good machine will save you time, but there is nothing like the good old fashioned, Cafetera, every Mom had or still has. A day that starts with good cafe con leche can be the difference between a great day and a bad day in Miami.

**For the purpose of these recipes we assume access to a fully stocked family kitchen with all the customary appliances, utensils, cutlery, flatware, etc.**

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El Desayuno / Breakfast

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# The Cuban Breakfast

## Cafe con Leche and Pan con mantequilla



Hot steamed milk with fresh  
Cuban coffee traditionally  
made with a very slight  
pinch of salt in the milk

Fresh toasted cuban bakery  
bread with a generous  
spreading of delicious butter

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# Torrijas in almíva

## Home style spanish toast in home made syrup

One Loaf of day old untoasted

Cuban bakery bread

2 eggs beaten

1/16 cup of Spanish cooking wine

2 table spoons of powdered cinnamon

1 cup of milk

Served with a sliver of butter on top along with a steamy cup of cafe con leche on the side, this breakfast delight was the special occasion or Sunday breakfast my grandfather loved dearly. He must of passed it on to me because it is my favorite morning treat. This is one dish I actually got to learn and make directly from my Grandmother because she allowed me to help her make them from time to time. I would love dipping the bread into the egg mixture that I would watch her make while I anxiously waited for my turn to dip.

She never measured anything, she just knew what each dish needed and quickly had everything done. I inherited a little bit of that ability to know what dish needs what from her, just to able to make some of the great food she made is a connection to my family I cherish. To be able to make them now for my mom and daughter is a joy. This is a rich and spectacular indulgent family classic dessert the way my abuelita made them. My Grandmother's Torrijas were the best. **Mine are a close second.**

*Gracias Abuelita!*

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# Torrijas in Almiwa

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Mix eggs, wine, milk and a tablespoon of cinnamon in a medium sized bowl big enough to fit bread slices approximately 2" by 4" 2 or three at a time. Dip the sliced bread pieces into the mixture coating both sides of the bread, then remove them to a separate dry plate. Repeat process for a few more pieces of bread pieces.

On a skillet, slowly melt 3 tablespoons of butter until it slowly sizzles, begin to place the dipped bread into the hot buttered pan. lightly fry until the bread becomes lightly browned turning it over to do both sides.

Remove from pan onto serving dish  
drizzle with home made almiwa.



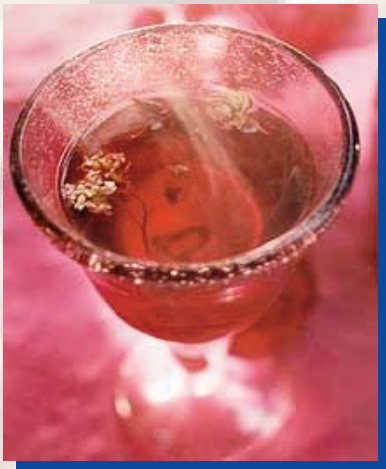
## Almiwa

Home made syrup

2 cups sugar

2 or 3 cinnamon sticks

4 cup of water



In a medium size sauce pan, boil 4 to 6 cups of water with two or three cinnamon sticks in it. Add 1 to 1-1/2 cups of sugar stirring constantly. Lower heat to medium high and continue to stir until the sugar is completely dissolved and the mixture begins to thicken. Remove from heat and allow to sit and cool. It will thicken upon cooling to a delicious rich cinnamon syrup which is then drizzled over the hot torrijas warm or cold depending on your mood. **YUM!**



# My Way of Cooking

## Miami

# style

by TD

... a sampling of recipes from my childhood memories,  
Have been specially selected for this preview eBook  
From my familys kitchen's with love...





# Sopa de Pollo - Chicken Soup



- 1lb Chicken
- 1 or 2 medium onions chopped
- 2 cloves of garlic
- Pinch of bijol - yellow color
- 2 whole corn on cob cut in half
- 1 or 2 chopped carrots
- 2 tbs of extra virgin olive oil
- 1 green plantain
- 1 small chorizo
- 1/4 cup of tomato sauce
- 1/4 teaspoon of oregano
- 2 potatoes quartered
- 1 package angel hair noodles
- Salt and pepper to taste

In a large pot of water add chicken, garlic, onions, corn, olive oil, chorizo, plantain and oregano over high heat covered, for approximately 45 minutes or until the chicken is fully cooked.

Add potatoes, cover and cook another 10 to 15 minutes, lowering heat to medium-high. Follow by adding the angel hair noodles, cook covered for another 5 minutes.

Remove cover, stir then lower heat to medium, add 1 cup of additional water allowing soup to simmer for a few minutes, stirring occasionally to enrich flavors. Allow to sit a couple of minutes so all the flavors can combine, then serve hot with a side of toasted Cuban bread or fried green plantains.

Considered by many to be the cure for the common cold, Sopa de Pollo, Chicken Soup is definitely a Cuban cure for a hungry appetite as a stand alone meal, or served as an appetizer to be followed by another dish. Chicken soup can boost the immune system anytime but specially when we are under the weather as it is a complete hearty meal disguised as a soup. **Yes...it's Soup!**

# Sopa de Res - Beef broth Soup



- 3/4 lb Flank steak
- 1 or 2 white or yellow medium onion chopped
- 2 cloves of garlic
- 2 whole corn on cob cut in half
- 1 or 2 chopped carrots
- 2 tbs of extra virgin olive oil
- 1 small chorizo
- 1/4 cup of tomato sauce
- 1/4 teaspoon of oregano
- 2 potatoes quartered
- 1 package angel hair noodles
- Salt and pepper to taste

**Be sure to follow all the instructions for your pressure cooker carefully.**

In your pressure cooker add 2 to 3 quarts of water, meat, garlic, onions, corn, olive oil, chorizo, and oregano, med heat covered. Cook for 30 to 45 minutes or until the beef shreds easily with a fork.

Once there, add potatoes, cover and cook another 10 to 15 minutes, lowering heat to medium-high. Follow by adding the angel hair noodles, cook covered for another 5 minutes.

Remove cover, stir then lower heat to medium, add 1 cup of additional water allowing soup to simmer for a few minutes, stirring occasionally to enrich flavors. Allow to sit a couple of minutes so all the flavors can unite, then serve hot with a side of bread or steamy white rice that some like to immerse into their soup.

Said to be able to raise the dead, Sopa de Res, Beef Soup is a hearty, traditional Cuban favorite at any time of year but, specially when the weather turns cool or when an immediate pick me up is needed. **Delicioso!**



## Muñeta

- 1 package great northern white beans
- 1 whole spanish chorizo (diced)
- 2- 3 oz Salt pork (diced)
- 1/4 white or yellow medium onion (diced)
- 1/4 Green pepper (diced)
- 1/4 can on spanish style tomato sauce
- Extra virgin olive oil

Cook beans in the pressure cooker with enough water to cover two or three inches over beans, leaving at least three inches of space over the line of water and beans combined. Add about a 1/8 of the salt pork into the water and pressure cook on medium heat until the beans are tender, around 15 to 25 minutes depending on your kitchen. Drain and remove from heat, scoop the beans into a food processor, pulsing beans a few times or simply smash with a potato masher until the bean shapes are no longer visible set aside while you prepare the muñeta base.

In a medium skillet, over a medium high heat (a nicely primed cast iron or a good non-stick skillet is critical for this dish because of the slow and extended cooking time which is needed make this dish correctly.) Combine all diced ingredients into the warm skillet where a couple of tablespoons of Extra Virgin Olive Oil are just beginning to sing, you can hear a nice low sizzle coming from the pan. Slowly stir the chorizo, salt pork, onions, and green pepper breaking down the flavors as they combine in your skillet nicely. Slowly add the tomato sauce, continually stirring, the mix until it reduces slightly, you will know you are on the right track because of the amazing aroma coming from your pan. Lower the heat to medium-low, to allow the individual flavors and juices combine to create our delicious base muñeta base. Now, into the skillet, begin to slowly fold in the white bean puree, mixing it completely, gradually bring the heat back to medium- high, continually stirring. You will notice your muñeta is now gaining elasticity from the starch in the beans, continue to add small amounts of oil around the edges, to prevent sticking and to give it a toasty edge. From this moment on, your muñeta is to be treated as you would a thick omelets, use a plate to flip it over, cooking both sides evenly is critical, the finished color should be a beautiful golden brown with dark toasty edges. Can be eaten as a side of just about anything! Try Muñeta. **My Mom Luisita's favorite!**



# Simple Black Beans - Frijoles Negros



- 1 package dry black beans
- 1 white or yellow medium onion
- 2 -3 cloves of garlic
- 1 bay leaf
- 1 teaspoon sugar
- 1 medium green pepper
- 2/3 cup of extra virgin olive oil
- 1/4 teaspoon of oregano
- 1 teaspoon of vinegar
- Salt and pepper to taste

Soak beans with the green pepper in water until they swell usually around 45 minutes to one hour.

In the same water, begin to cook

beans over medium heat, adding the onions and the green pepper slightly roasted on the stove top.

Add the garlic, bay leaf, oregano, and sugar slowly cook beans until tender for approximately one hour. When beans are tender, remove from heat, add the Extra Virgin Olive Oil, and the teaspoon of vinegar, stir well, allow to sit for a few minutes, serve over steamy white rice. A rich, Cuban traditional holiday favorite. Noche Buena (Christmas Eve) would not be the same without our delicious

**Frijoles Negros.**

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# Hearty Red Beans - Frijoles Colorados



- 1 package dry red kidney beans
- 1 white or yellow medium onion
- 2 -3 cloves of garlic
- 1 small bay leaf
- 1 medium ham shank (lacon)
- 1 medium chorizo
- 1 - 2" inch piece of salt pork (tocino)
- 1/4 medium green pepper
- 1/8 cup of extra virgin olive oil
- 4 oz tomato sauce
- Salt and pepper to taste

Soak beans with in water until they swell, approximately 1 hr 45 minutes.

In the same water, cook beans over medium heat, until tender for approximately one hour.

Add the onions, green pepper, garlic, as sofrito cooked on the skillet.

Add bay leaf, slowly cooking beans to blend flavors. Remove from heat, add the Extra Virgin Olive Oil, stir well, allow to cook over low heat for a another 30 minutes, adding a little more water that will reduce in the final stage. Served over steamy white rice this is another Cuban traditional favorite that goes great with roasted pork, chicken or grilled steaks with a side of sweet ripened, fried plantains (platanos maduros). This is definitely my favorite of all the "potajes", bean stews or soups,

**Frijoles Colorados are the best!**

# Rabo Encendido

## Spicy Cuban style oxtail in sauce



- 3-5 lbs fresh oxtails
- 2 green peppers
- 1 Onion white or yellow
- 1 can spanish style tomato sauce
- 1 Bay leaf
- a dash of Oregano
- 1/2 cup of Red Spanish cooking wine  
(Vino tinto)
- 1/8 cup Extra Virgin Olive oil
- 1 tablespoon Salt
- 1 tablespoon Pepper

Optional, 1 or 2 Havanero chilli's  
to add heat, cause as we all know,  
Some like it HOT!

Start by placing washed, trimmed ox tail into the pressure cooker in water to cover the meat around 2 inches over. Add onions, Bay leaf. oregano, salt & pepper and pressure cook until the meat is tender. Usually between 10 & 15 minutes depending on your kitchen. Once tender, safely open the cooker, add green peppers, tomato sauce, cooking wine, some olive oil and the chilli's if you are using them. Reclose the pressure cooker and pressure cook another 10 to 20 minutes. Take off the heat, safely re-open and let sit for a few minutes before serving over steamed white rice, a side of sweet fried plantains, a fresh salad. Add a "potaje," a stew and you are eating royally. My Godmother Aida made an unbelievable Rabo. However, her sister, my Mom, the picky eater, did not like the oxtail, but loved the sauce. The solution: My Godmother would add steak or flank steak to the Rabo, cooked them together, a bonus for us, and a great way to adjust a meal for the special eaters who might not like oxtail but love the spicy sauce. **I love it ALL!**



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