



Peru
Delights

6
Christmas
Treats



Christmas is around the corner and we thought of giving you a little present to show our gratitude for following us. In fact, we have many presents in store for you, and this is the first one on the list.

All of us, foodies and cooks, are always wondering what to serve for dinner in that special Christmas celebration, so in this book we are giving you a recipe for every course other than the turkey, ham, or whatever you usually have as a main course: a hors d'oeuvre, a salad, a side dish, a cocktail, and a couple little somethings.

The main dish will be the subject of a blog post, as well as desserts and hot drinks. We wish you the best holidays with family and friends. Good company, high spirits, and great food are the best combination.

Happy Christmas to you all!

Peru Delights – 6 Christmas Treats

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And help us spread the love for our Peruvian dishes.

Puff Pastry Cones with Aji de Gallina



These hors d'ouvres are the best to have in hand, and very easy to make. They can be filled with everything: cheese paste, seafood, vegetable mousses, and even with pastry cream, as I do, or better yet, with Italian meringue as a sweet, very sweet treat.

- Puff pastry (buy it in the frozen section of the supermarket)
- [Aji de gallina](#)
- Curly parsley leaves

Defrost the puff pastry, cut long strips, $\frac{3}{4}$ inch wide, and roll around metal cones, starting from the tip.

Put in baking sheets and bake at 375°F for 20 minutes or until golden and puffed.

Let cool in racks, unmold carefully, (you don't want to break them), and cool completely. You can make them ahead and store them in an air-tight container for up to three days.

A few minutes before serving, fill with aji de gallina at room temperature. Garnish with curly parsley, and serve.



Quinoa Salad

As an alternative for the holidays I like to serve quinoa as a salad, because in South America Christmas is in the summer time, and something refreshing is de rigeur. It can be a side dish for the turkey, or a light lunch by itself with some vegetables on the side.

- 8 oz. white quinoa, cooked in boiling water for 13 minutes
- 4 oz. red quinoa, cooked in boiling water for 13 minutes
- 1 celery stick, finely sliced
- 1 tomato, peeled, seeded, and diced
- 3 oz. pecans, toasted and chopped
- ½ red pepper, finely diced
- ½ Granny Smith apple, finely diced
- Salt and pepper
- Dressing
- Parsley leaves
- Mint leaves

Strain both quinoas and keep in a bowl. Mix with all the ingredients but the parsley and mint. Garnish with parsley and mint leaves. Serve at room temperature.

For the dressing: Blend 1/2 cup vegetable oil, 2 tablespoons vinegar, 1 teaspoon Dijon mustard, 1 teaspoon sugar, 1/2 teaspoon salt.



Christmas Rice

For us there is no Christmas without turkey, but more people choose another protein for their dinner. Nowadays, rice must also be on the table, garnished with many vegetables and dried fruits. For leftovers, if any, add sliced turkey to the rice for a complete meal.

- ½ cup olive oil
- 6 strips bacon
- 1 onion, diced
- 3 garlic cloves, chopped
- 3 cups raw rice
- Salt and pepper
- 1 teaspoon powdered cinnamon
- 4 ½ cups boiling water
- ½ cup toasted almonds
- ½ cup dried and chopped apricots, macerated in wine up to one day
- 2 cups spinach, cut in slices
- ½ red pepper, diced
- 2 tablespoons sauco (elderberry) marmalade

Heat the oil in a saucepan, add bacon, onion and garlic, cook over high heat, stirring every now and then. Add rice, stir, add salt, pepper, and cinnamon. Add water, cover, lower the heat and cook for 20 –25 minutes until the rice is done. Add apricots, toasted almonds, spinach, red pepper and sauco (elderberry). Stir and serve.

Balsamic Syrup

- 6 tablespoons sugar
- 6 tablespoons balsamic vinegar
- 3 sage leaves, chopped
- Salt and pepper

In a small saucepan over high heat melt the sugar and add the vinegar. Cook until reduced by half. Add salt and pepper, and sage leaves. Pour over the rice. Serves 6.



Pisco & Aguaymanto Cookies



My daughter gave me this recipe that she created last Christmas. These cookies are delicious, with the texture of the dried aguaymantos and the Pisco flavor. Don't worry about getting tipsy, because the alcohol evaporates in the oven and only a subtle flavor is detectable, so even children can have them. I freeze the raw balls of dough for several months, and when I have a craving, only bake one or two.

- 1 stick unsalted butter, softened
- ½ cup light brown sugar
- ¼ cup sugar
- 1 egg
- 1 tablespoon Pisco
- 1 ¼ cups all-purpose flour
- ½ teaspoon baking soda
- ½ teaspoon salt
- 25 dried aguaymantos (golden berries), macerated at least one day in Pisco
- 2 oz. pecans, chopped

In a bowl mix sugar, brown sugar and butter, whisking with a wire whisk. Add egg and Pisco. Incorporate flour, baking soda, and salt. Then add drained aguaymantos (golden berries) and pecans.

With an ice cream scoop form 2 inch balls, accommodate in a baking sheet covered with silpat or parchment, and put in the fridge a couple of hours, or freeze them and pop them in freezer bags to bake later.

Preheat oven to 375°F. Bake the cookies from the freezer for 10 – 12 minutes.

Yield: approx. 7 cookies



Maná

I have a weakness for maná, and have one or two every time I am near them.

Traditionally, they are presented as fruits, and their color varies depending on the occasion. If it's a Baby Shower, they have pastel colors, pink or blue, depending if the baby is a girl or a boy. In First Communions, they are white. Sometimes I make little balls and cover half of them with chocolate.

- 10 egg yolks
- 2 eggs
- 1 quart milk
- 1 lb. + 3 oz. sugar
- 8 oz. powdered sugar

In a heavy saucepan put egg yolks, eggs, milk and regular sugar. Cook over medium heat, stirring every now and then until the mixture is curdled, and you can see the bottom of the saucepan.

Turn off the heat. Now you can mix with a wooden spoon and the force of your arms, or pour everything in the mixer and beat, adding the powdered sugar, little by little, until it looks like marzipan and it's cool.

You can form little fruits, use this dough to cover cakes, or store in a bag in the fridge for several days.



Sol y Sombra

Looking for a different cocktail? Quebranta is the type of Pisco made with non-aromatic grapes.

You can look for it in liquor stores, but feel free to substitute with Brandy or Grappa.

- Ice cubes
- 1 oz. Pisco Quebranta
- ½ oz. Creme de Cassis
- 1 tablespoon lime juice
- Ginger Ale

Fill a tall glass with ice cubes.

Add Pisco, Creme de Cassis, lime juice, and fill with Ginger Ale.

