

## BRAZILIAN-STYLE FISH STEW

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When I was seeking a bit of dinner inspiration many years ago, I came across a recipe for a Brazilian fish stew, called Moqueca. The recipe immediately grabbed my attention as it not only sounded interesting and delicious, but contained ingredients I had on hand and seemed fairly quick to prepare. I was not disappointed. Since that time, I've learned more about this traditional stew, which is strongly influenced by Portuguese and African cuisine.

Just as with many dishes, Moqueca has many versions depending on the region and personal style of cooking. This bright and flavorful stew typically features fish and/or shrimp, but may also include crab or lobster. The stew's flavor profile is traditionally created with tomatoes, onions, garlic, lime, and coriander. Fish stock or coconut milk are also commonly used.

In keeping with my routine of putting a personal twist on things, I have added a few non-traditional ingredients to the recipe to increase the nutrient factor, such as ginger, turmeric, and carrots. I've also been known to use leeks in place of onions or add cauliflower florets when I am cleaning out the veggie bin.

Palm oil or red palm oil is commonly called for in traditional Moqueca recipes. Because it is known to be high in saturated fat, I use olive oil in its place.

Some traditional Moqueca recipes call for the addition of chili peppers such as dedo de moça chiles, Scotch bonnet, or bird's-eye. If you are interested in trying one of these types of chilis, look for them at local Latin or Caribbean markets or some well-stocked grocers. I generally use the readily available habanero or milder jalapeno pepper. Remember to use caution when working with chili peppers - wear gloves, do not touch your face, eyes, or skin, and thoroughly wash your hands, knife, and cutting board after using.

In Brazil, this stew is served with steamed white rice. I suggest using steamed brown rice or brown basmati rice for the added health-boost.

Makes: 6 servings

### INGREDIENTS

#### Marinade

- 3 tablespoons lime juice
- 1 tablespoon ground cumin
- 1 tablespoon sweet paprika
- 2 teaspoons minced garlic
- 1 teaspoon minced ginger
- 1/2 teaspoon ground turmeric
- 1/4 teaspoon kosher salt
- 1/8 teaspoon ground black pepper

## Stew

2 tablespoons olive oil  
1 small to medium onion, diced  
1 small carrot, peeled and diced  
1 bell pepper, diced (any color or combination of colors)  
1 medium habanero or jalapeno pepper, small diced, seeds removed  
1/4 teaspoon kosher salt  
12 ounces firm white fish filets, cut into large chunks about 3" in size  
(cod, hake, mahi-mahi, grouper, haddock, flounder, or another favorite)  
1 - 14.5 ounce can diced tomatoes, drained (low or no-added salt)  
1 - 13.5-14 ounce can unsweetened coconut milk, stirred to combine  
1 - 12 ounces jumbo or large raw shrimp, peeled, deveined, tails removed  
Cooked brown rice  
Fresh cilantro, chopped for garnish  
Fresh lime, cut into small wedges

## **DIRECTIONS**

1. In a large mixing bowl, stir together the lime juice, cumin, paprika, garlic, ginger, turmeric, salt and pepper. Add the fish and shrimp, gently turning to coat. Cover the bowl, and allow the fish and shrimp to marinate for 15 minutes in the refrigerator.
2. Heat the olive oil in a Dutch oven or another large pot (with a cover) over medium heat. Add the onion, carrot, bell pepper, and habanero or jalapeno. Sauté until the onions are translucent and all of the veggies are soft, about 5 - 8 minutes. Sprinkle the 1/4 teaspoon kosher salt on top of the vegetables.
3. Reduce the heat to medium-low. Remove the fish from the marinade and place in a single layer over the vegetables in the pot. (Do not add the shrimp at this point.) Pour the diced tomatoes over top, and then the canned coconut milk. Cover the pot and gently simmer for 15 minutes; gently stir occasionally.
4. Add the shrimp to the pot, and stir the ingredients gently to combine. Continue to simmer for 5 - 10 minutes, until shrimp is cooked through (pink and slightly curled).
5. Serve the stew in bowls over brown rice and garnish with a sprinkling of fresh, chopped cilantro. Add a spritz of lime juice (from the wedges) over the top of each serving.