

Shrimp, Cod, and Chorizo Tapa *al Ajillo* TAPA DE GAMBAS, BACALAO Y CHORIZO AL AJILLO

This is an incredibly easy dish to make. What's important with something so simple is that the quality of the ingredients needs to be very high—not because of price, but more important, for flavor. You will see there are many opportunities to deviate from this preparation, for example, using different fish and shellfish, herbs, or other seasonings. Serving steamed potatoes or saffron flavored rice on the side are wonderful additions. Putting it all together in an oven-to-table baking dish is preferable, and using a Spanish terra cotta baking dish called a *cazuela* will be *muy auténtico!*

Makes 4-6 small plate servings

The amount given with a “QB” ingredient is a suggestion. “QB” stands for “quanto basta.” It basically means in Italian “how much is needed.” It’s up to you how much or how little to use. The amount may also change due to the quality of the ingredient or how old it is.

- *9 large shrimp, shelled and deveined*
- *Four 3-ounce pieces of cod filet, preferably center-cut*
- *1/4 cup Spanish Arbequina extra virgin olive oil*
- *1 tablespoon minced garlic QB*
- *1/2 teaspoon Spanish pimenton “dulce” QB*
- *1/4 teaspoon ground dried Spanish Guindilla peppers QB*
- *1/2 ounce dry Spanish chorizo, very thinly sliced*
- *4 bay leaves, preferably fresh*
- *Half lemon cut crosswise then cut into 4 wedges*
- *Fine sea salt, for seasoning*
- *2 teaspoons freshly chopped flat leaf parsley*
- *4 pieces Pan con Tomate (recipe follows)*

Use the tip of a paring knife to make an incision along the top, thicker half of each piece of shrimp. Be careful not to cut all the way through.

Place the cod and shrimp in an oven-to-table baking dish large enough to hold the seafood in a single layer.

Combine the oil, garlic, pimento, and pepper flakes in a small bowl.

Pour the mixture over the fish and coat each piece.

Scatter the chorizo on top and push it between the pieces of seafood.

Nestle the bay leaves between the pieces of seafood.

Squeeze the lemon wedges so the juice is over and around the seafood then insert them the same way as the bay leaves.

Keep at room temperature for 30 minutes.*

Preheat oven to 375°F

Season the fish with a little salt then bake until the cod and shrimp are opaque but still tender, 12 to 15 minutes.

Remove the bay leaves and lemon wedges.

Scatter the parsley on top.

Make the *pan con tomate* during the baking time. Serve both warm.

** By letting the seafood sit at room temperature for a half hour you are both marinating it and doing what's called, "tempering." When the cod and shrimp are baked with less or no chill the result will be even cooking with a tender texture instead of using the seafood directly from the refrigerator to the baking dish. This tip can be used for all of your fish, poultry, and meat cooking. Just remember, when there is less chill, cooking times will be reduced.*

Grilled or Toasted Bread with Tomato

PAN CON TOMATE

- *1 medium ripe red organic tomato cut in half crosswise*
- *Four pieces 4-inch long 1/2-inch thick slices of rustic bread, preferably day-old*
- *Olive oil, for grilling*
- *1 clove of garlic, peeled*
- *Spanish Arbequina extra virgin olive oil, for finishing*
- *Flaked sea salt, for finishing*

Heat an outdoor grill or grill pan to medium high.

Use the large holes of a box grater to grate the tomato pulp into a bowl then discard the skins.

Brush the bread with a little olive oil on one side and grill, oiled side down, until charred grill marks appear.

Grill the other side to almost the same doneness.

Rub the first grilled side of the bread with a few swipes of garlic.

Spoon about a tablespoon of the tomato pulp on each piece of bread.

Use the back of the spoon to gently spread and push the tomato into the bread.

Arrange the bread on serving plates or a platter.

Finish with a generous drizzle of extra virgin olive oil and a sprinkle of the salt.