



Daisy's Recipes: Spicy Pineapple Vinegar

LATIN SEAFOOD

With their access to the Mediterranean and Caribbean Seas and the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans, Latin cooks have access to an enormous variety of fish and shellfish. No wonder La Cocina Latina abounds in extraordinary seafood dishes. Come with Daisy as she visits Spain, Chile and Brazil—all without leaving her kitchen. Featured recipes: Mariscada en Salsa Verde (Shellfish in Green Sauce), Seviche de Camarones (Shrimp Seviche) and Acaraje, a Brazilian dish that pairs navy beans and shrimp.

Spicy Pineapple Vinegar

Vinagre

"Vinagre" -- a condiment that gives sparkle, a citrus-fruity tinge, heat, and aroma-takes just about any dish to places it has never been before. I realize that if you don't know about vinagre, you could probably live a full and happy life. But once you taste it, you'll be lost without it. My mother used to sit the jar of vinagre in the sun, but I just pour the pineapple liquid over the vegetables while it's still hot, which achieves the same thing--getting the vinagre off to a head start.

Makes about 1 quart

2 ripe pineapples
1/2 large Spanish onion, sliced thin
1 tablespoon smashed fresh oregano leaves
1 teaspoon black peppercorns
20 garlic cloves, crushed
6 Habanero peppers or chili pepper of your choice,
stems cut off, peppers coarsely chopped
1 tablespoon cider vinegar, or as needed
1/2 teaspoon salt, or as needed

1. Cut the tops off the pineapples and discard them. With a big knife, cut off the rind from the pineapples with as little pineapple attached as possible. Put the rinds in a pot large enough to hold them comfortably and pour in enough water to cover them. Bring to a boil and boil until the pineapple peel is very tender, about 30 minutes. Top off with water if necessary to keep the rinds submerged.

2. Meanwhile, put the onion, oregano, peppercorns, garlic, Habanero or other chili pepper, vinegar, and salt in a large jar with a tight-fitting lid.

3. Strain the pineapple liquid over the seasonings. If there is not enough liquid to cover the ingredients, re-cover the pineapple with water and boil for 20 minutes. Taste and add a little salt and/or a little vinegar, if you think it needs it. You can use it as soon as it cools, but it will get better as it sits.