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## MOROS Y CRISTIANOS

SUNDAY, APRIL 11, 2010

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A few days ago, I shared my secrets to making the perfect (to me) Cuban sandwich, one of which was a succulent and juicy, marinated roast pork or **lechón asado**. But, man (or woman) cannot live by Cuban sandwiches alone. No, no, no! One also needs a few fabulously delicious Cuban side dishes to complement those sandwiches. And, Moros y Cristianos is one of them.

Moros y Cristianos is the Cuban version of rice and beans. It translates to English as “Moors and Christians”. This interesting title is presumed to be a reference to the period during the Middle Ages called the **Reconquista**, when the Moors occupied the Iberian Peninsula, and the Spanish won it back. The black beans represent the Moors, who were dark-skinned, and the white rice represents the Christians, who were light-skinned. Since Cuba was colonized by the Spanish in the early 1500’s, and since Spain continues to have a strong influence on Cuban culture, the name has stuck.

Though just as traditional, this dish differs from seasoned black beans over rice you might find on the menus of various Cuban restaurants. To make Moros y Cristianos, a **sofrito** of onions, peppers and garlic is first prepared. The beans and either water or broth are added and the beans are simmered in it until tender. Then, the rice is added right to the same pot and cooked with the beans and vegetables. It’s a perfect one pot dish!

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### Hi, the cook!

Hello and welcome to SGCC! I’m Susan, a professional writer, food columnist, recipe developer, wife, mother, daughter and sister, who used to be a lawyer in a previous life. My love of food comes from a long line of wonderful and creative Italian home cooks who didn’t always have a lot, but knew how to make a lot out of what they had. I hope that you enjoy yourself while you’re here, and visit often! [read more >>](#)



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As with the lechon asado, the recipe I’ve used for my Moros y Cristianos is adapted from [Three Guys from Miami](#). To make this dish a little more user friendly and realistic for a quick weeknight meal, I’ve used canned black beans in this recipe instead of dried. I’ve made it both ways, and trust me, it is just as tasty using the canned beans. Just make sure you drain and rinse them well before cooking.

I used chicken broth to make this dish, but you can easily use water or vegetable broth to keep it vegetarian. You can also amp it up by plopping the bone left over from your lechon asado in the pot while cooking. As always, you just need to do what works best for you. However you choose to make Moros y Cristianos, it will be a hearty, flavorful and very satisfying meal!



**Moros y Cristianos**  
adapted from Three Guys From Miami

Ingredients:

4 15-ounce cans black beans, drained and rinsed



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1/4 cup olive oil for sautéing  
2 1/2 cups white onion, diced  
2 1/2 cups bell peppers, seeded and diced (I used a mixture of green, red and yellow.)  
4 garlic cloves, crushed and chopped  
3 teaspoons ground cumin  
1 teaspoon oregano  
1 bay leaf  
3 tablespoons white vinegar  
2 tablespoons tomato paste  
2 teaspoons salt  
1/2 teaspoon pepper  
4 1/2 cups chicken broth  
3 cups long-grain white rice

Directions:

1. Rinse the rice with cold water until the water runs clear. Set aside.
2. Use a large, eight-quart covered stockpot. Sauté the onion and green pepper in the olive oil until tender. Add the garlic, and sauté another minute or two. Add the tomato paste, black beans, oregano, cumin, bay leaf, and vinegar. Cook for about five minutes, stirring gently.
3. Add the chicken stock and the rinsed rice. Bring to a boil, reduce heat to low, cover and cook for about 20-30 minutes — until the rice is fully cooked.
4. Remove the bay leaf and add salt and pepper to taste.

*For an added treat, drizzle some Spanish olive oil (don't be stingy!) over the rice in the pot and fluff cooked rice gently with a fork. If plating the rice as a side dish, drizzle a little olive oil over individual servings and garnish with some parsley or cilantro.*

Serves 8

[Translate]

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*12 responses to Moros y Cristianos*

On April 11, 2010 at 10:23pm, [Tangled Noodle](#) said...

In my book, this is THE perfect dish! This makes a huge amount but I have no doubt that I'm up to the task of finishing every bean and grain. Delicious!



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On April 11, 2010 at 10:34pm, [Joanne](#) said...

A history lesson AND a delicious recipe. How much better can you get! This looks delicious.



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On April 11, 2010 at 11:09pm, [Ciaochowlinda](#) said...

great dish with lots of flavor. I never heard the name until this weekend when I saw it on "Daisy Cooks".



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On April 11, 2010 at 11:19pm, Margaret said...

Looks too easy to look so tasty.



Reply

On April 11, 2010 at 11:28pm, nina said...

This is a newbie for me too. I think I will serve this quite easily for a Meatless Monday option and my family will love it!! Thx Susan!



Reply

On April 12, 2010 at 4:19am, Rosa said...

I am a big fan of such rice dishes! Tasty and exotic!

Cheers,

Rosa



Reply

On April 12, 2010 at 7:59am, Sarah said...

This looks delish! I lived in Miami for a while and I grew to LOVE Cuban food, I actually just wrote a post about doing a Cuban/Miami theme dinner party, so this would be perfect there!

<http://www.20somethingcupcakes.com/2010/04/miami-vice-theme/>



Reply

On April 12, 2010 at 1:14pm, Rachel (S[d]OC) said...

Looks great. I'm glad you're not hatin' on the canned beans. We don't all have time to soak!

Keep the Cuban recipes coming!



Reply

On April 12, 2010 at 7:37pm, susan from food blogga said...

I really enjoyed reading about the history of this dish, Susan. I wish I had tasted some when I was in Miami recently. Seems I would have been better off coming to your place. 😊



Reply

On April 12, 2010 at 10:49pm, Memoria said...

I love moros and cristianos. I used to eat this dish at a Cuban restaurant called "Versailles" in Los Angeles. Thanks for sharing this recipe.

P.S. Have you figured out the accent mark situation?



Reply

On April 13, 2010 at 11:08am, Manggy said...

Hmm, I'm beginning to sense a theme!! JUST KIDDING! 😊 Anyway, I am a big proponent of rice and beans (though I never blog about it) - inexpensive, delicious, healthy. What more can you ask for, really?!



Reply

On April 19, 2010 at 3:19pm, Michelle said...

I really enjoyed reading about the history of this dish, Susan. I wish I had tasted some when I was in Miami recently. Seems I would have been better off coming to your place. 😊



Reply

## 2 pings to Moros y Cristianos

On June 26, 2010 at 5:34pm, Columbus Foodie » Blog Archive » April 2010 Roundup pinged...

[...] Runs with Spatulas, Maine Lobster Rolls from Seasaltwithfood, Roast Pork Belly from she craves, Moros y Cristianos from Sticky, Gooley, Creamy, Chewy, Seared Scallops with Lime and Miso Dressing on Avocado Puree [...]

On July 24, 2011 at 11:40pm, Ropa Vieja | Gluten-Free Sunday Dinner | Misterbelly pinged...

[...] mixed with rice). There are a plethora of Moros y Cristianos recipes out there, but I settled on one from Sticky, Gooley, Creamy, Chewy. The recipe is good, but needs a little bit of tweaking for my personal taste. I'd halve the [...]

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