

Virtual Welcoming Table April 2022

Thank you so much for participating in our virtual Welcoming Table! We are hoping to resume in-person gatherings later this year, but until then we are excited to share this Welcoming Table kit with you.



Our kit this month highlights the cuisine and culture of Chile. Officially the Republic of Chile, this country is located in the western part of South America. Its capital and largest city is Santiago. It is the southernmost country in the world and the closest to Antarctica and is a long, narrow strip of land bordered by the Andes Mountains and the Pacific Ocean.

Chile has been populated since at least 3000 BC by dozens of indigenous groups of people. There are three major indigenous groups: the northern people who developed rich handicrafts, the Araucanian culture who were known for agriculture, and the Patagonian culture who were nomadic hunters and fishers. By the 16th century, Spanish conquistadors had begun to colonize the area. In 1810, a war began with nationalists seeking independence from Spain. The war ended in 1818 and Chile became an independent republic.

Chile has many unique geographic components including the Ojos del Salado, a crater lake that is also the world's highest and the Atacama Desert, which is the most arid desert in the world. The wildlife in Chile is also very diverse. Some animals found in Chile include alpacas, armadillos, Andean foxes, penguins, and flamingos. The national animal of Chile is the North Andean huemul or taruca, which is a type of deer.

Our featured dish this month is pastel do choclo which mean "corn pie" or "corn cake". To go along with the pastel do choclo is mote con huesillos which is a fruity, summertime beverage that looks similar to bubble tea. Most of the ingredients are provided, but you will need salt, milk, butter, oil and sugar. Our activity this month is kite flying, which is recognized as a sport in Chile and has a lot of cultural significance. Chile's national independence day on September 18 is celebrated by many by flying kites.

We hope you enjoy your Welcoming Table kit and would love to see photos or videos of your experience. We'd love to hear from you, email us at info@projectfine.org or text to 507-452-1190. Enjoy!

PASTEL DO CHOCLO

In pastel de choclo, there are two key components to the recipe: the Mapuche (indigenous people)-derived “corn dough” and the Spanish-derived filling. This dish is a phenomenal representation of mestizo (mixed) cooking. The most common form of Chilean pastel de choclo consists of the filling that is regularly used in Spanish-style empanadas covered by a corn mixture similar to the Mapuche humitas. The recipe’s genesis is thought to have come from the kitchens of old colonial haciendas, where Mapuche cooks leveraged Spanish ingredients to create a more diverse eating experience for their rural communities.



INGREDIENTS

1 onion, diced	2 t salt, divided
3 cloves garlic	1 oz raisins (small box)
3 carrots, diced	1-2.25 oz sliced black olives
8 oz sliced Mushrooms	3 cooked hard boiled eggs (optional)
24 oz bag frozen corn, divided	1 c milk (preferably whole), divided
2 t cumin	¼ c butter
1 t oregano	2 t dried basil
1 t paprika	1 t sugar

DIRECTIONS

Preheat oven to 375 F.

Heat oil in a large pan, add onions, carrots and garlic 3-5 minutes until tender-crisp. Turn off heat, add spices and cook 1-2 minutes. Place in a 9" x 13" casserole dish and top with olives and raisins (and chopped hard boiled eggs if using)

Place the corn kernels in a food processor or blender with 1/4 cup milk. Process for 1 to 2 minutes, until the corn is blended and appears creamy.

Melt 1/4 cup of butter in a large saucepan. Add 1 teaspoon salt and the blended corn mixture.

Add the remaining 3/4 cup milk and simmer, constantly stirring, until the mixture thickens—about 5 to 10 minutes.

Spread the corn mixture over the top of the casserole then sprinkle with sugar.

Bake 30 to 45 minutes, until filling is hot and the corn mixture is golden brown. Serve warm.

MOTE CON HUESILLOS

This is the most common non-alcoholic beverage in Chile – many say it is as central to the culture as Apple Pie is to the United States. It is most often served during the summertime (December-March) but is also quite popular during the national Fiestas Patrias holiday in September.

INGREDIENTS

1 cup pearl barley
8 ounces dried peach halves
5 cups water
1/4 cup sugar
1 stick cinnamon
Lemon peel

DIRECTIONS

Cook the pearl barley: bring 2 quarts of water to a boil in a pot. Add barley, return to a boil, then reduce heat to medium-high and boil uncovered 25–30 minutes. Drain and let cool.

Prepare the peaches: there are 2 methods – either method you use, keep the water to be used later in the recipe. Traditionally, the peaches are soaked in 5 cups water overnight in the refrigerator and then drained before using. For a quicker preparation, place them in a pot and cover with 5 cups water and cook just until they boil. Turn off the heat, let cool and continue with the recipe.

In a large heavy pot, pour sugar and cook over medium heat, moving pan frequently but not stirring until the sugar melts and takes on a light amber hue.

Remove from heat, then add one cup of the reserved water and stir well.

Continue to cook over medium heat until the sugar has dissolved and become a caramel consistency.

Add the remaining water, peaches, cinnamon stick and lemon peel.

Return to a simmer and cook until tender, about 30 minutes.

Cool to room temperature then chill until cold.

Add 2 to 3 tablespoons of cooked mote or barley to the bottom of a tall glass.

Add 2 to 3 peach halves and top off with juice.

Stir in additional sugar or honey to taste.

Serve with a spoon to break up the peaches.

