

## GALLO PINTO - NICARAGUA & COSTA RICA

Gallo Pinto is served with nearly every meal in Nicaragua, and Costa Ricans will look at you like you are crazy if you ask how to prepare this dish. Simple to make and quite satisfying, this is a great accompaniment to any Latin meal.

1 lb (450 gr.) Black beans. Fresh are best.  
8-10 sprigs cilantro (coriander leaf) fresh or frozen, not dried  
1 small or medium onion  
½ small red or yellow sweet pepper (optional)  
3 cups (700 ml) chicken broth or water  
2 cups (350 ml) white rice  
½ teaspoon (2.5 ml) salt  
1 Tablespoon (15 ml) vegetable oil  
1-3 Tablespoon oil to fry the Gallo Pinto

If beans are dried, cover with water and soak overnight, if they are fresh, just rinse them off. Drain beans and add fresh water to an inch above the top of the beans, salt, and bring to a boil. Cover the pan, reduce heat to low simmer until beans are soft (~3 hours).

Chop cilantro, onion, and sweet pepper very fine.

Add 1 Tablespoon oil to a large pan and sauté the dry rice for 2 minutes over medium high flame then add half of the chopped onion, sweet pepper and cilantro and sauté another 2 minutes. Add water or chicken broth, bring to a boil, cover and reduce heat to simmer until rice is tender (20-35 minutes).

Once the rice and beans are cooked you can refrigerate or freeze them. Keep a significant amount of the "black water" with the beans (½-1 cup). This is what gives the rice its color and some of its flavor. Sauté the rice, beans, reserved chopped onion, sweet pepper and cilantro together in vegetable oil for a few minutes. Sprinkle with a little fresh chopped cilantro just before serving.

Once the rice and beans are cooked you can also refrigerate or freeze them. Make up small batches of Gallo Pinto when you want it by simply sautéing them together.