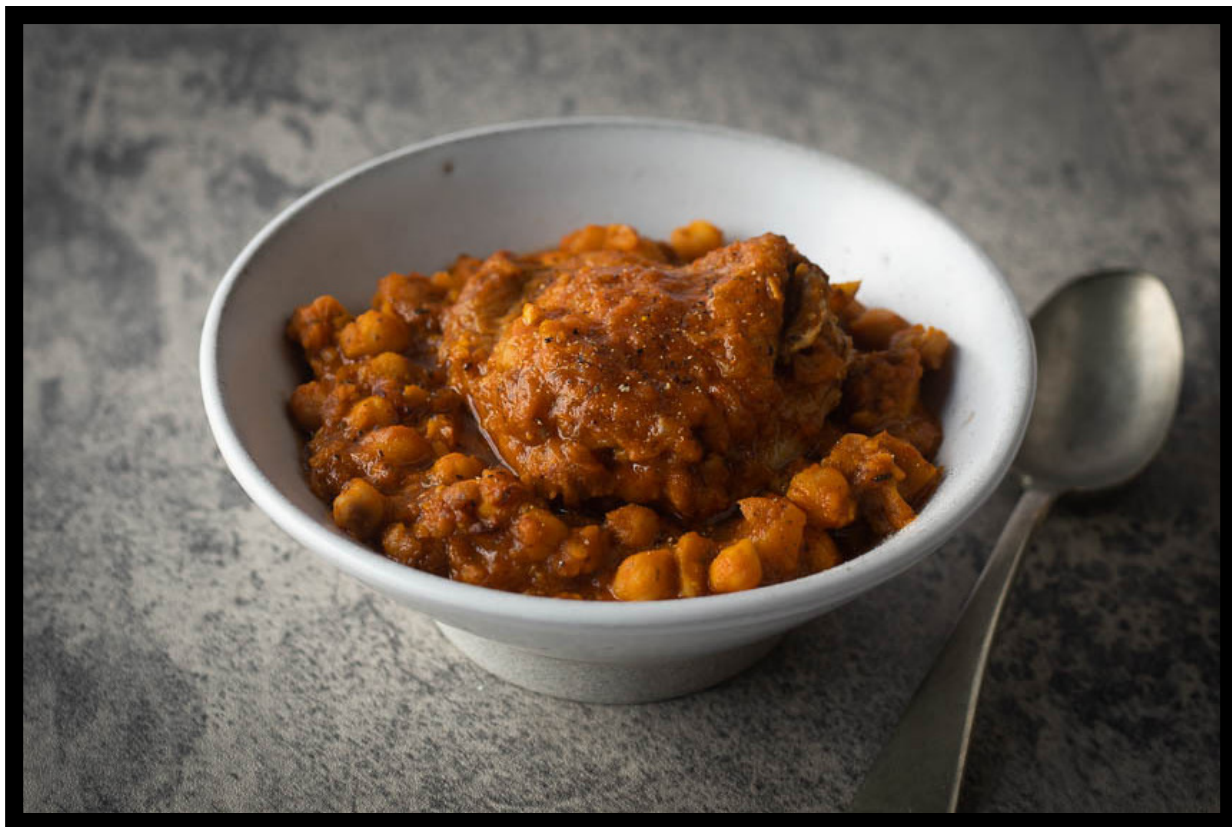


RANCHO GORDO presents

# ILLYANNA MAISONET'S PUERTO RICAN KITCHEN



**3 RECIPES**  
THAT CELEBRATE PUERTO RICAN  
HOME COOKING

## #1. CHICKEN AND CHICKPEA STEW

Serves 4

Garbanzo beans (chickpeas) were brought to the island of Puerto Rico by the Spanish (who probably got them via Turkey or Morocco) and historically have never cultivated well on the island's wet and humid climate. Not a damn garbanzo grows on the island to this day. Puerto Ricans came to love garbanzos. Some folks leave the garbanzos for the buffet salad and hummus, but Boricuas love to include them in long braises until they become luscious. Ready for a protein-packed, "set it and forget it" dish? Look no further.

*½ pound uncooked Rancho Gordo Garbanzo beans, picked over and rinsed*  
*Sea salt*

### FOR THE ACHIOTE OIL:

*⅓ cup canola oil*  
*⅓ cup achiote/annatto seeds*

### TO FINISH:

*2 tablespoons salt-free multi-herb seasoning blend*  
*Salt and pepper to taste*  
*4 bone-in chicken thighs, with skin*  
*½ cup tomato sauce*  
*½ cup sofrito (see right)*  
*1 large potato, diced*  
*½ of a small orange*

Soak beans overnight in enough cold water to cover the beans by 2 to 3 inches (they may double in size).

In a large pot over high heat, add the beans and enough water to cover the beans by about 2 inches. Increase heat to high; bring to a rapid boil for 15 minutes. Reduce heat to medium-low, cover the pot, and simmer gently. Make sure the beans are always covered by at least an inch of water, adding more hot water as needed. After about an hour of cooking, add a tablespoon of sea salt; allow beans to continue cooking until tender.

### FOR THE ACHIOTE OIL:

In a small sauté pan or skillet over medium heat, warm the oil. Add the achiote seeds and sauté until the oil is bright red, 2 to 3 minutes. Make sure not to burn the seeds, which happens quickly, otherwise your oil will be bitter. Set aside.

### TO FINISH:

Transfer the beans and cooking liquid to a bowl, and wipe out the pot. Place the empty pot on the stove over medium-high heat. Pour the achiote oil through a sieve into the pot (discard the seeds).

Place the chicken thighs, skin side down, into the pot, then season with the herb blend, salt, and pepper. Cook the chicken until the skins have browned, about 5 minutes. Flip the chicken and pour the beans and at least 5 cups of bean broth back into the pot (if you don't have enough bean broth, use water or chicken broth to make up the difference). Bring to a simmer.

Add the sofrito and tomato sauce. Reduce the heat and simmer until the chicken is tender, 40 minutes to 1 hour. Add the potatoes and cook for 15 to 20 minutes, or until the potatoes are soft and the broth has thickened. Turn off the heat. Squeeze half of a small orange into the stew. Taste and adjust the seasonings with more salt and/or pepper. Serve.

### SOFRITO

Yields about 14 ounces

*1 medium roma tomato, roughly chopped*  
*1 medium onion, roughly chopped*  
*5 cloves garlic, roughly chopped*  
*1 medium green bell pepper, roughly chopped*  
*1 bunch cilantro, roughly chopped*

Place tomato in blender, blitz until smooth. Add onion and garlic and blitz until smooth. Add bell pepper and cilantro, blitz until smooth. Pour mixture into a standard ice cube tray and freeze.

Sofrito will keep frozen for six months. If using right away, set aside amount needed for recipe, or store in refrigerator for up to one day.

## #2. GUAVA-BAKED MARCELLA BEANS

Serves 6 to 8

While guava paste seems to appear in a plethora of desserts, Puerto Rico took the time to allow this ingredient to shine in savory recipes as well. One of Puerto Rico's quintessential dishes are "pinchos." These grilled chicken skewers are slathered in a guava barbecue sauce that sizzles and chars above the gray charcoal. Baked beans always seem to have a barbecue-ish taste to them, so combining guava seemed like a no-brainer.

*1 pound uncooked Rancho Gordo Marcella or Royal Corona beans, picked over and rinsed*  
*Sea salt and ground pepper*  
*½ pound thick-sliced bacon strips, diced*  
*1 large yellow onion, diced*  
*5 garlic cloves, minced*  
*2 cups ketchup*  
*1 cup packed light brown sugar*  
*½ cup molasses*  
*½ cup sofrito (see page 2 for recipe)*  
*½ cup guava paste (from brick in plastic wrap)*  
*1 tablespoon Worcestershire sauce*  
*1 tablespoon Rancho Gordo Mexican Oregano*  
*1 tablespoon Rancho Gordo Oregano Indio*

Soak beans overnight in enough cold water to cover the beans by 2 to 3 inches (they may double in size).

In a large pot over high heat, add the beans and enough water to cover the beans by about 2 inches. Increase heat to high; bring to a rapid boil for 15 minutes. Reduce heat to low and simmer gently, with the lid on. Make sure the beans are always covered by at least an inch of water, adding more hot water as needed. After about an hour of cooking, add a tablespoon of sea salt; allow beans to continue cooking until they are just tender but still have some bite. Drain beans, reserving the cooking liquid.

In a large pan over medium heat, sauté the bacon until crisp, 2 to 5 minutes. Drain on paper towels and set aside. Reserve 2 tablespoons of the bacon fat. Add the onion and sauté in the bacon fat until translucent, 2 to 5 minutes. Add the garlic and cook for 1 to 2 minutes. Add the ketchup, brown sugar, molasses, sofrito, guava paste, Worcestershire sauce, oreganos, reserved bacon, and salt and pepper; stir to combine. Add the beans to

the mixture. If the bean mixture is too thick, add some of the reserved bean cooking liquid to reach your consistency preference.

Preheat the oven to 325°F.

Place the beans in an ungreased 4-quart enamel baking dish. Cover with foil and bake for 2½ to 3 hours, or until beans are tender. If the mixture starts to get too thick, add more of the reserved bean cooking liquid.

Ladle the beans into bowls to serve.

### #3. ROASTED CHICKEN WITH OREGANO

Serves 4 to 6

Oregano can be a strong and pungent lead singer, which may be why so many people tend to stay away from this diva. But, in typical Puerto Rican fashion, Boricuas go hard on the oregano. This floral leaf gets a workout in this recipe, placing emphasis on its existence by not only including it...but, massaging it in, releasing its natural oils. And while you'd think it'd be too strong, it tends to mellow out once it knows it's in a safe space with the backup vocalists: vinegar and achiote.

#### FOR THE CHICKEN RUB:

*5 garlic cloves, finely chopped*

*Kosher salt, to taste*

*1 tablespoon ground achiote/annatto seeds*

*1 tablespoon paprika*

*2 teaspoons ground cumin*

*Pinch of black pepper, or to taste*

*2 teaspoons Rancho Gordo Mexican Oregano*

*1 tablespoon olive oil, plus more if needed*

#### TO FINISH:

*1 tablespoon Rancho Gordo pineapple vinegar*

*Juice of 1 lemon*

*Juice of 1 small orange*

*1 medium onion, halved*

#### FOR THE CHICKEN RUB:

In a mortar, mash the garlic with a pinch of salt until a paste forms. Add the ground achiote, paprika, cumin, oregano, pepper, and oil and mix together.

#### TO FINISH:

In a separate bowl, combine the pineapple vinegar, half the lemon juice, and the orange juice (reserving the orange peel). Stir this into the garlic-spice mixture. Rub the marinade evenly over the chicken, ensuring you also rub it under the skin. Place the rest of the lemon juice, orange peel, and the onion halves in the chicken cavity. Tuck the wings underneath the bird.

Let stand for at least an hour. (You can also let the chicken marinate overnight. Allow the chicken to sit at room temperature for at least 30 minutes before roasting.)

Preheat oven to 400°F.

Season the chicken with salt. Place in a large roasting pan or large cast iron skillet. Roast the chicken for 30 minutes, then baste with the pan juices. (If no pan juices have accumulated at this point, baste the skin with a bit more olive oil.) Continue roasting the chicken, basting every 30 minutes, until the skin is golden brown and its juices run clear and a thermometer inserted into the thigh reaches 160 degrees. (Depending on the size of the chicken, this will take 75 to 90 minutes.)



## **ILLYANNA MAISONET**

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