



PUERTO RICAN

Pastelón

COMPLEXITY	SERVES	PREP	COOK	TECHNIQUE	CUT
Involved	8	40 min	1 hr	Bake	Ground beef

Ingredients

PICADILLO FILLING

- 700 g (1½ lb) ground beef
- 2 tbsp olive oil
- 1 onion, finely chopped
- 1 green bell pepper, finely chopped
- 4 cloves garlic, minced
- 3 tbsp sofrito (jarred, in the international aisle; or 1 extra minced garlic clove, 2 tbsp chopped cilantro and 1 tbsp chopped bell pepper)
- 1 packet sazón with coriander and annatto (or 1 tsp paprika and ½ tsp turmeric)
- 1 tsp dried oregano
- 120 g (½ cup) tomato sauce

PICADILLO FILLING (CONT.)

- 80 g (½ cup) pimento-stuffed olives, chopped
- 2 tbsp raisins
- 1 tsp salt

LAYERS

- 5 very ripe plantains (yellow with black spots), peeled and sliced lengthways 1 cm (½ in) thick
- 120 ml (½ cup) vegetable oil, for frying
- 6 eggs, beaten
- 150 g (1½ cups) shredded mozzarella or cheddar

Steps

1. Heat the olive oil in a large skillet over medium heat. Cook the onion and pepper for 6 minutes until soft, then add the garlic, sofrito, sazón and oregano for 1 minute.
2. Add the beef, turn the heat to medium-high, and cook for 8 minutes, breaking it up, until browned and no pink remains; ground beef is safe at 71°C (160°F).
3. Stir in the tomato sauce, olives, raisins, salt and 60 ml (¼ cup) water. Simmer for 10 minutes until thick and nearly dry.
4. Heat the vegetable oil in another large skillet over medium heat. Fry the plantain slices in batches for 2 to 3 minutes per side until golden brown and caramelised. Drain on paper towels.
5. Heat the oven to 180°C (350°F) and grease a 23 x 33 cm (9 x 13 in) baking dish.
6. Layer half the plantains to cover the bottom, spread over half the cheese, then the beef, then the remaining cheese and plantains.
7. Pour the beaten eggs evenly over the top, letting them seep down the sides.
8. Bake for 30 to 35 minutes until the eggs are set and the top is golden. Rest 10 minutes, then cut into squares.

Notes

- **Plantains:** they must be very ripe and soft for a sweet, tender result.
- **Make ahead:** assemble a day ahead; bake from cold, adding 10 minutes.
- **Serving:** it is a complete dish with a simple green salad.

- **Freezer:** freeze baked squares for up to 3 months; thaw overnight in the fridge and reheat until steaming hot, 74°C (165°F).