

# AT THE ISLAND'S EDGE: A Novel

## By: C. I. Jerez

### TRADITIONAL PUERTO RICAN DRINKS & APPETIZERS

DATE: \_\_\_\_\_ BOOKCLUB NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

#### DRINKS

**What is Coquito?** Coquito is a traditional Puerto Rican drink that is thick, creamy, and tastes of cinnamon spiced coconut. It's like eggnog but made with coconut instead of eggs. Coquito is typically served chilled and during the holidays, Thanksgiving and Christmas.

#### Traditional Coquito – No Alcohol (Serves 3)

**EQUIPMENT** - Blender or Food Processor

#### INGREDIENTS

12 ounces evaporated milk	2 ounces sweetened condensed milk
8 ounces cream of coconut	6 ounces coconut milk - canned
½ teaspoon vanilla extract	½ teaspoon ground cinnamon
3 cinnamon sticks - optional garnish	

#### INSTRUCTIONS

To a blender or food process, add the evaporated milk, cream of coconut, canned coconut milk, sweetened condensed milk, vanilla extract, and ground cinnamon.

Blend on high speed until well combined, about 1 to 2 minutes.

Pour into an airtight glass container and refrigerate overnight or until chilled.

Shake the bottle well before pouring into glasses.

Garnish with a dusting of cinnamon and a cinnamon stick.

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### Vegan Coquito – No Alcohol (Serves 4)

**EQUIPMENT** - Blender or Food Processor

#### INGREDIENTS

14 oz can of coconut milk full fat	14 oz can of cream of coconut
1/3 cup of almond milk	1/2 teaspoon of cinnamon
1/2 teaspoon of nutmeg	1/4 teaspoon of cloves
1 teaspoon of vanilla (4g)	alcohol free rum essence/optional

vegan condensed milk optional, to taste

#### INSTRUCTIONS

Pour and combine all the ingredients into a blender.

Proceed to blitz at high speed until smooth and creamy in texture

Stir in the rum flavoring (if you are using to your desired taste)

Pour into a pitcher jug or funnel into a bottle

Refrigerate prior to serving

Garnish with nutmeg or cinnamon and enjoy

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**History of the Piña Colada:** The origin of the Piña Colada began in 1950s San Juan, Puerto Rico. The bartender Ramón "Monchito" Marrero Perez developed the cocktail when he was mixing cocktails for the Caribe Hilton Hotel. First as a non-alcoholic combination of coconut cream and pineapple juice, then later with rum. And just like that, Perez invented one of the most famous summer cocktails in the world.

### Piña Colada – No Alcohol (Yields 2 – 3 Servings)

**EQUIPMENT** - Blender or Food Processor

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## INGREDIENTS

1 1/2 cups unsweetened frozen pineapple chunks                      1/4 cup ice  
3/4 cup unsweetened pineapple juice  
3/4 cup unsweetened coconut milk  
1 to 3 tablespoons brown sugar, optional  
Fresh pineapple wedges, for garnish                      Maraschino cherries, for garnish

## INSTRUCTIONS

Place **1 1/2 cups unsweetened frozen pineapple chunks** and **1/4 cup ice** in a blender.

Pour **3/4 cup unsweetened pineapple juice** and **3/4 cup unsweetened coconut milk** over the top. Add **1 to 3 tablespoons brown sugar**, if using. Puree until smooth. Taste to test the sweetness and add more sugar, if desired.

Pour into glasses and garnish with **fresh pineapple wedges** and/or **maraschino cherries**.

## APPETIZERS

### PINCHOS de POLLO (BBQ Chicken Skewers) – Serves 4

**EQUIPMENT** - Grill

## INGREDIENTS

2 lbs boneless chicken thighs, cut into 1-inch pieces  
2 garlic cloves, finely minced                      1 tsp sazón                      1 tsp garlic powder  
1 tsp onion powder                      1 tsp cumin                      1 tsp oregano  
1/2 lemon                      2 tbsp olive oil                      1/2 cup bbq sauce  
salt and pepper to taste

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## **INSTRUCTIONS**

If using wooden skewers, make sure to soak them in water for at least 30 minutes otherwise they can burn.

Slice the chicken into 1-inch pieces and trim off any fat.

Add the chicken pieces to a large bowl along with the spices, garlic, olive oil, and lemon juice. Mix well.

Thread chicken onto skewers. I did about 5 chicken pieces per skewer. Season the chicken with salt and pepper on both sides.

Heat your grill to about 400 degrees F. and lightly oil the grill so the chicken doesn't stick.

Place the skewers on the grill and sear for about 5 minutes. I like to close the grill so the chicken cooks quicker.

Flip the skewers and cook for 3 minutes. Then flip and brush with bbq sauce.

Continue flipping the chicken and brushing it with bbq sauce until it's fully cooked through.

Serve with lemon and extra bbq sauce on the side if desired and enjoy!

## **Puerto Rican Shrimp Ceviche – Serves 4**

**EQUIPMENT** - None

## **INGREDIENTS**

1 lb raw or cooked shrimp small or large shrimp peeled and deveined

1 small red onion peeled and thinly sliced or chopped

2 tomatoes chopped

1 whole red pimiento pepper chopped

½ green bell pepper chopped

3 cloves garlic thinly sliced or finely chopped

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6 limes juiced or ½ cup of fresh lime juice

½ bunch cilantro rinsed and chopped

¼ cup light olive oil      2 tablespoon ketchup      salt and pepper to taste

### **INSTRUCTIONS**

#### **For Raw Shrimp**

Rinse under cool water, remove shells and devein.

If shrimps are large, chop into smaller pieces. If shrimps are small, you can keep whole.

Add shrimps to a bowl or container and refrigerate until ready to use.

#### **For Frozen Shrimp**

Add frozen shrimp to a bowl of very cold water and allow shrimp to thaw in the refrigerator.

Once thawed, drain the bowl of water and discard.

Deshell and devein shrimps if needed.

Rinse under cool water. Set in a bowl and refrigerate until ready to use.

#### **Veggies and Limes**

Rinse the tomatoes, pepper and cilantro under cool water.

Chop pepper, tomatoes and cilantro.

Thinly slice onions and garlic cloves.

Juice the limes and set juice aside.

Add the vegetables to a large bowl.

#### **Making Ceviche with Raw Shrimp**

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Remove the shrimp from the refrigerator, add the lime juice and onions.

Cover and refrigerate for 30 minutes.

After 30 minutes, add the other ingredients, olive oil, ketchup, salt, pepper to taste and stir well together.

If adding avocado cubes, add now.

Cover and refrigerate for another 15 minutes.

Ceviche is ready to serve.

Serve with fried green plantain chips or tortilla chips.

## **Making Ceviche with Frozen Shrimp**

Remove the shrimp from the refrigerator and add the lime juice, olive oil, ketchup and all the other ingredients.

Add the salt and pepper to taste and stir all ingredients well.

If adding avocado cubes, add now.

Cover and marinate shrimp for 15-30 minutes to allow all flavors to combine.

Ceviche is ready to serve.

Serve with fried green plantain chips or tortilla chips.

## **Notes**

**PLEASE NOTE:** “Cooking” time will vary depending on the size of your shrimp. The smaller the shrimp, the less time it will need to marinate in citrus juices.

For shrimp that are ready to eat, look for shrimp to be pink on the outside and opaque on the inside.

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### **VEGAN – AREPAS de COCO (Puerto Rican Coconut Fry Bread)**

**Yields 24 total**

**EQUIPMENT** – Bowl, whisk, biscuit cutter, skillet

#### **INGREDIENTS**

2 cups all-purpose flour

1 tsp baking powder

1 cup sugar

1/4 tsp salt

1 cup canned coconut milk (DO NOT use the entire can of coconut milk. Just 1 cup)

#### **INSTRUCTIONS**

Combine flour, baking powder, sugar, and salt in a medium bowl. Wisk until well combined and add coconut milk. Mix until just combined. Flour your hands and work surface. Then knead the dough until completely combined and tacky. Place in a bowl, cover with kitchen towel and let rest for 30 minutes.

Divide the dough in half. On a floured work surface roll one-half about 1/8 inch thin. Using a glass or biscuit cutter cut rounds in the dough and repeat with remaining dough.

Heat oil in a large skillet over medium-high heat. Test oil with a scrap of dough. It should puff and float. Once the oil is hot you can then carefully add dough rounds to the oil. Fry until dough puffs and then turn the rounds. Continue to fry until golden brown.

Transfer to a plate lined with paper towels to drain and cool. Serve warm and crisp.

**\*\*If you have an allergy to coconuts, you can use whole milk in place of coconut milk.**

Neither coconut flour nor almond flour can be used as a substitute for all-purpose flour. They are both very dense flour and will not work for this recipe.