

Jamaican Rice and Peas

A note to readers: Growing up in a Jamaican family, food was always a focal point. The earlier version of Jamaican Rice and Peas posted here was an inaccurate representation of a dish that is true to my culture and the many people that enjoy it. Culturally relevant recipes should be developed with thoughtful consideration of their origin. Here, I'm proud to share my mom's recipe for Jamaican rice and peas. Jamaican rice and peas—seasoned with the special trinity of thyme, scallion, and garlic—is a staple dish of the island. Like clockwork, my mom cooked Jamaican rice and peas with a baked chicken every Sunday. Its woody flavor is heightened by the addition of whole pimento seeds (aka allspice berries) and its subtle heat comes from the Scotch bonnet pepper. We always had Scotch bonnet peppers in the refrigerator and my mom would cut slivers from them to add to almost everything. When used whole, the pepper lends a slightly fruity flavor without the intense heat because the seeds and flesh are not exposed. The very hot Scotch bonnet pepper can be found in farmers' markets or Caribbean grocery stores, but a habanero pepper is a good substitute. I like to use dried dark red kidney beans. They are often featured in this dish, but you can also use green pigeon peas (aka gungo peas), which are also commonly used. The coconut milk is infused with the reddish tint of the beans, which gives the rice its signature blush. Plus: [Jamaican Jerk Chicken](#)

Active: 20 mins **Total:** 2 hrs **Yield:** 6 to 8

Ingredients

Ingredient Checklist

- 1 cup dried kidney beans—rinsed, soaked overnight and drained
- 3 cups water
- 1 small onion, finely chopped
- 2 scallions, finely chopped
- 3 garlic cloves, minced
- 5 allspice berries
- 5 thyme sprigs
- 1 Scotch bonnet pepper
- 1/2 teaspoon grated fresh ginger
- Kosher salt
- Black pepper
- One 13.5-ounce can unsweetened coconut milk
- 2 cups long-grain white rice



Directions

Instructions Checklist

- **Step 1**

In a large saucepan, cover the beans with the water and bring to a boil over moderately high heat. Stir in the onion, scallions, garlic, allspice, thyme, Scotch bonnet, ginger, 2 teaspoons salt and 1/2 teaspoon pepper. Stir in the coconut milk and bring to a simmer. Cover and simmer over low heat until beans are tender, about 1 hour; adjust the heat as necessary to maintain a gentle simmer.

- **Step 2**

Stir in the rice, cover and simmer over low heat until the rice is tender and the liquid is absorbed, about 30 minutes. Remove from the heat and let steam for 10 minutes, then discard the thyme stems, allspice berries and Scotch bonnet. Using a fork, fluff the rice and beans and season with salt. Serve hot.