

Causa de Pulpa de Cangrejo

This favorite Peruvian appetizer is made by layering cold mashed potato cake with fillings of avocado and crab meat.

The recipe was provided by Adolfo Miguel Perret Bermúdez, chef and owner of the Punta Sal restaurant chain in Lima, which specializes in fish and seafood dishes. It is featured in **Eat Smart in Peru: How to Decipher the Menu, Know the Market Foods & Embark on a Tasting Adventure** by Joan Peterson and Brook Soltvedt (©6/06, \$13.95 pb, ISBN: 978-0-9641168-0-1, www.GinkgoPress.com.). Serves 6.

1 3-inch round mold or cookie cutter
3 pounds yellow potatoes (Yukon gold, for example)
salt and pepper to taste
2/3 cup finely chopped red onion
2 cloves garlic, minced
1/8 cup vegetable oil
1 teaspoon water
3 tablespoons *ají amarillo* paste*
juice of 2 Key limes
1 avocado

Crab meat salad

7 ounces fresh cooked crab meat
1/2 cup mayonnaise
salt and pepper to taste

Dressing

4 teaspoons mayonnaise
2 tablespoons purple olive paste
1 teaspoon mustard
1/2 teaspoon minced garlic

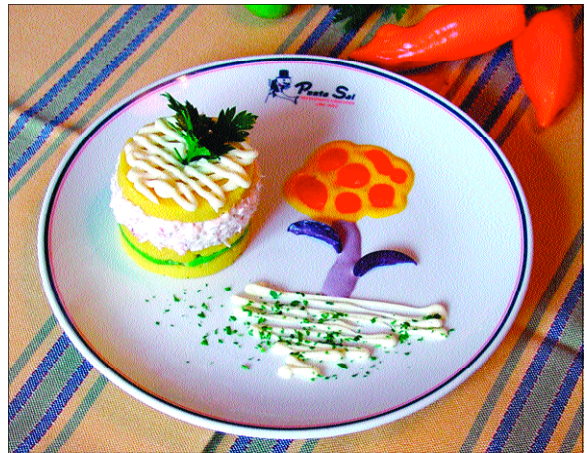
Garnish

a few sprigs of cilantro dipped in olive oil
6 lettuce leaves
6 black olives
3 hard-boiled eggs, quartered
3 1/2 ounces farmer's cheese (*queso fresco*), cut in six slices

Boil the potatoes in salted water, being careful that they don't split open. When the potatoes are soft and while still hot, peel and mash them. Season with salt and pepper to taste, and set aside.

Sauté onion and garlic in oil. To make a paste of the vegetables, place onion and garlic in a small blender with 1 teaspoon water, and blend until smooth. Add vegetable paste, chile-pepper paste and lime juice to the mashed potatoes. Mix well. Add vegetable oil to the potato mixture as needed to prevent it from sticking.

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Divide the potato mixture into six parts, one for each *causa*. Pat out one potato portion into a layer about 1/2-inch thick. Cut with the mold to form the three layers of the *causa*, leaving the mold in place on the last circle. Place thin slices of avocado on the potato layer inside the mold. Place another potato round over the avocado slices, sliding the mold up as necessary. Cover this potato layer with crab meat salad made by mixing cooked crab meat with mayonnaise, salt and pepper. Place the third potato layer on top of the crab meat and carefully remove the mold. Repeat until six *causas* are constructed.

To make the dressing, blend mayonnaise with olive paste, mustard and garlic, and spread a thin layer on top of each *causa*. Decorate with a few sprigs of cilantro. Serve on a lettuce leaf and garnish with an olive, two quarters of hard-boiled egg, and a slice of cheese.

*Despite the name (literally, yellow chile pepper), this Peruvian chile pepper is orange. *Ají amarillo* paste is available in many markets selling Latino foods, or make your own (recipe following).

Pasta de Ají Amarillo

Yellow chile-pepper paste. Makes about 3 tablespoons.

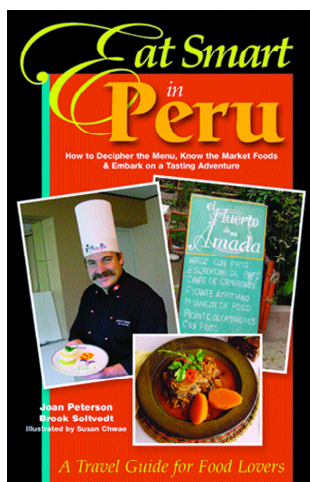
3 *ajíes amarillos*, fresh, frozen or bottled

Handle chile peppers carefully: their oils can irritate or burn the skin or eyes. Thaw frozen peppers. To remove skins, boil fresh or frozen peppers 1 minute and then transfer to ice water for about 1 minute. Peel with a paring knife. Bottled peppers peel easily without preparation. To make peppers less hot, remove seeds and veins. Cut fresh or frozen peppers in small pieces and boil in 1 cup water (1/2 teaspoon salt and 2 teaspoons vinegar, optional) for 5 minutes. Wash thoroughly in cold water. Repeat boiling and washing procedure. Drain. Bottled peppers do not require the boiling and washing steps. Grind peppers with 1 teaspoon water in a small blender to form a smooth paste. Freeze unused portion for later use.

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To request a review copy of **Eat Smart in Peru**, arrange an interview with Joan Peterson, or for any additional information, please contact Kate Bandos at KSB Promotions 800-304-3269 or 616-676-0758 • fax 616-676-0759 • e-mail: kate@ksbpromotions.com



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