

Cocochas al Pil-Pil · The Hake-Throat Gelatin Emulsion

The deep-Basque follow-up to bacalao al pil-pil — twenty hake throats (cocochas), each a small collagen-dense pocket of flesh from under the jaw of the hake, confited at 65°C in olive oil with garlic and guindilla, then the cazuela swirled off-heat until the throats' own gelatin binds the oil into a silky pale sauce.

Cocochas are pil-pil's summit — they contain roughly 3× the gelatin of bacalao loin, which means the sauce forms faster, thicker, and more spectacularly. A ● single-tier dish — Basque-specialty ingredient, no Tier A substitute, celebratory-occasion cooking. The dish every Bilbao asador serves proudly. 30 minutes start to table; the technique teaches pil-pil at its richest expression.

Protein Cocochas de merluza (hake throat/kokotxa)

Serves 4 as tapa · 2 as main

Difficulty Intermediate

Active 25 min

Total 30 min

The Small Throat Piece That Changes Everything

A cocochas — kokotxa in Basque — is a small V-shaped piece of flesh from under the chin of the hake (or cod), where the throat meets the jaw. Each piece is about 20-30 g, gelatinous, and mostly pure collagen with a thin membrane of muscle. There are two per fish. Historically the cocochas were bycatch — Basque fishmongers discarded them or gave them to cooks who wanted to work with them; they were too small, too odd-shaped, and too gelatinous for traditional fillet markets. But Basque cooks figured out that those same properties — high collagen, small size, tender — made them the absolute ideal pil-pil ingredient. Cocochas are pil-pil-native in a way that bacalao loin (Batch 8 · this workspace) approaches but never equals.

The physics: where bacalao's gelatin comes from the skin (which the cook has to carefully rest and manage during confit), cocochas are essentially all-gelatin throughout their volume. When you drop 400 g of cocochas into 300 ml of 65°C oil, the gelatin releases almost instantly + in quantity, and the emulsion that forms in the subsequent swirl is roughly 3× thicker and richer than anything bacalao produces. A successful cocochas pil-pil has a sauce with the body of soft whipped cream — visibly clinging to each throat piece, pooling beautifully on the plate, coating the bread that guests will absolutely use to sop the last drops.

The temperature: 65°C (lower than bacalao's 70°C). Two reasons. First, the higher gelatin concentration means faster extraction — you don't need as much heat to release it. Second, cocochas are smaller + more delicate; higher heat would tighten the thin muscle membrane and dry the throat piece. 65°C × 6-7 minutes cooks them perfectly while preserving the silken texture.

A confession: this is a 🇪🇸-only dish. Cocochas are genuinely hard to source outside Spain. La Tienda in Virginia air-ships frozen Spanish cocochas in small packs; Marky's Aventura occasionally has them; fresh cocochas require a direct line to a Spanish-import fishmonger. There is no American equivalent that works — cod throats (sometimes sold as 'cheeks') are a reasonable stand-in but 30% less gelatinous + slightly different texture. For this dish, either you have access to cocochas or you don't. When you do, make it. When you don't, bacalao al pil-pil (Batch 8) is the alternative that teaches the same lesson at accessible ingredient cost.

Specs

<p>YIELD</p> <p>400 g cocochas → 4 tapa portions or 2 main</p>	<p>COCOCHAS</p> <p>~20 pieces at 18-25 g each</p> <p>Spanish/Basque import (frozen-from-Spain is standard)</p>	<p>CONFIT TEMP</p> <p>65 °C / 150 °F – lower than bacalao (70 °C) because cocochas have more gelatin + thinner muscle</p>	<p>EMULSION WINDOW</p> <p>50 - 60 °C – narrower and cooler than bacalao's window</p>
<p>CAZUELA</p> <p>18-20 cm cazuela de barro (slightly smaller than bacalao's because cocochas are compact)</p>	<p>DIFFICULTY</p> <p>Intermediate</p> <p>●●●○○ (technique ceiling is cocochas-specific; basics cross-ref bacalao)</p>	<p>ACTIVE TIME</p> <p>25 min</p>	<p>KEY RULE</p> <p>Cocochas cook fast (6-7 min at 65°C). Do not overcook — the thin muscle membrane tightens and the piece toughens. Exactly 6-7 minutes, then off to emulsify.</p>

What Changed & Why

This recipe is ● Tier B only — like lobster-butter-poached-sv (Batch 9 · this workspace), the core ingredient has no meaningful Tier A substitute. Cocochas are a Basque-specialty ingredient that require direct sourcing from a Spanish importer. Sources: **La Tienda** (frozen, direct-ship from Virginia to Miami, reliable) or **Marky's Gourmet Market (Aventura)** on Spanish-import days (call ahead; they stock occasionally). Frozen is standard — 400 g packs thaw overnight in fridge. Acceptable substitute only when cocochas are unreachable: **cod throats (cheeks)** from a quality American fishmonger — 30% less gelatinous, slightly firmer texture, but same technique works. The oil + aromatics use the summit-tier ● sources: **Rincón de la Subbética Arbequina + Las Pedroñeras DOP purple garlic + guindilla de Ibarra**. This is a dinner-party recipe; it's OK for it to be expensive.

CHANGE	ORIGINAL	UMAMI VERSION	WHY
TECH	Confit cocochas at a gentle simmer until tender	Confit at exactly 65°C (thermometer verified) for 6-7 minutes — NOT 70°C, NOT 8+ minutes	Cross-reference: bacalao-al-pil-pil Phase 3 (Batch 8 · this workspace). Same 70°C sweet spot for bacalao is too hot for cocochas — the smaller pieces + thinner muscle membrane overcook at 70°C within 4-5 minutes. 65°C gives the gelatin release + muscle cook without toughening. The higher gelatin concentration in cocochas (vs bacalao skin) means you don't need the extra 5°C to extract it — gelatin releases faster at lower temperature when it's more concentrated. 6-7 minutes at 65°C is the narrow correct window.

CHANGE	ORIGINAL	UMAMI VERSION	WHY
TECH	Swirl the cazuela after removing cocochas to build the emulsion	Remove cocochas; cool cazuela to 50-60°C (narrower + cooler than bacalao's 55-65°C); return cocochas; begin swirl	Cocochas' higher gelatin load means the emulsion forms faster AND breaks faster — the window is narrower. 50-60°C is the stable sweet spot; above 60°C and the emulsion starts breaking from the abundance of dissolved gelatin (the 'too much of a good thing' problem). The swirl time is similarly shorter — 90 seconds to 2 minutes vs bacalao's 3-4 minutes. Listen + watch: as soon as the sauce has body + clings to the throats, stop swirling.
ADD	—	Reserve 1 tbsp of the thawing-bag liquid from the cocochas — pour back into the cazuela as emulsion insurance if needed during swirl	Frozen Spanish cocochas come in a small liquor of their own juices (2-3 tbsp per 400 g pack). This liquor is pure gelatin-rich fish essence — save it. During the swirl phase, if the sauce isn't thickening (rare with cocochas but possible with lower-quality packs), add this liquor drop by drop to kickstart the emulsion. Cross-reference: bacalao-al-pil-pil Phase 5 emergency note — same principle, better ingredient. Any leftover liquor can be frozen in ice cubes for future fish-stock uses.

CHANGE	ORIGINAL	UMAMI VERSION	WHY
ELEV	Standard olive oil	Rincón de la Subbética summit Arbequina — the oil is roughly 40% of finished flavor in pil-pil	Cross-reference: bacalao-al-pil-pil 🟠 oil card. For cocochas specifically, the softer-sweeter Arbequina profile lets the fish gelatin shine; Picual's peppery profile would compete. Tier-B summit Arbequina is the right choice. If pushing toward bolder flavor: Castillo de Canena Family Reserve Picual provides a peppery-grassy counter to the cocochas' richness — both oils produce excellent results, different directions.
SKIP	Add cream or milk to the sauce for extra richness	No dairy. Not ever. The gelatin is the richness; adding cream would be wrong-direction additive and dilute the Basque identity of the dish.	Cocochas pil-pil is almost never served with dairy. The cocochas' own gelatin produces a sauce richer than most dairy-based sauces, and adding cream muddies both the flavor + the pure pil-pil identity. Stay with the four ingredients: cocochas + oil + garlic + guindilla. That's the dish.

What You Need

● Everyday

Note

- This dish is ● Tier B only. See the ● ingredients section below. The ● path is 'make bacalao al pil-pil instead' (Batch 8 · this workspace) — same technique category, accessible ingredient.

● No Limits

The Cocochas

- 400 g **cocochas de merluza** (hake throats) — **La Tienda** online (frozen, direct-ship to Miami) is the reliable year-round source. **Marky's Aventura** carries them occasionally on Spanish-import days (call-ahead). Frozen is standard; thaw overnight in fridge in their packaging. Reserve any liquor that accumulates in the bag during thaw — do not discard. See [sourcing/03-seafood](#) and [sourcing/06-spanish-pantry](#).

The Oil + Aromatics

- 300 ml **Rincón de la Subbética summit Arbequina** OR **Castillo de Canena Family Reserve Picual** — the oil is 40% of finished flavor; use the best
- 4 cloves **Las Pedroñeras DOP purple garlic**, sliced into 2 mm coins
- 1-2 **dried guindillas de Ibarra** (Basque mild chile) from La Tienda
- Fine sea salt (if needed — cocochas are naturally saline, taste before adding)

The Emulsion Insurance

- 1 tbsp of the cocochas thawing-bag liquor, reserved cold — as insurance during swirl phase

Service

- Flat-leaf parsley, finely chopped
- Crusty bread — pan de payés (Batch 7 · this workspace) or a good Basque country loaf
- **Fleur de sel** or **Maldon** for finishing

EQUIPMENT

Your Kit

- 18-20 cm cazuela de barro (smaller than bacalao's cazuela; cocochas pack tighter). If unavailable, a heavy-bottomed stainless saucier with sloped sides.

- Probe thermometer (instant-read) — non-negotiable for the 65°C confit temperature + emulsion window verification

- Slotted spoon or fish spatula — for lifting cocochas out of oil

- Small bowl for reserved thawing liquor

- Small plate for resting aromatics (garlic coins + guindilla)

- Warm serving plate

MISE EN PLACE

Before You Start

- Cocochas thawed overnight in fridge; liquor reserved; pat dry with paper towels

- Garlic sliced into 2 mm coins; guindilla de-stemmed

- Thermometer ready; oil measured into cazuela

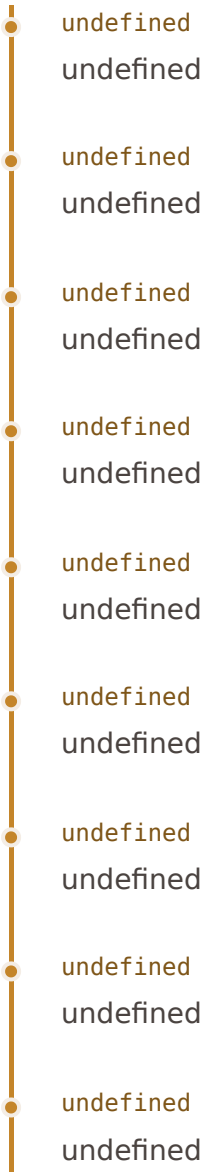
- Parsley chopped; bread sliced and ready

- Warm serving plate in 50°C oven

MAKE-AHEAD

Timeline

- undefined
- undefined



METHOD

The Cook

1 Phase 1 · Thaw + Prep — 10 minutes

1. Cocochas should have thawed overnight in fridge in their original packaging. If time-pressed: 1 h in a cold-water bath works.
2. Open the pack over a small bowl — reserve any accumulated liquor (typically 2-3 tbsp of milky-white fish juices). Set aside cold; you'll use ~1 tbsp as emulsion insurance.
3. Pat each cocochas gently with paper towels to remove surface moisture. Don't press hard — the flesh is delicate.
4. Slice 4 garlic cloves into 2 mm coins. De-stem 1-2 dried guindillas (keep seeds for mild heat, discard for no heat).
5. Measure 300 ml olive oil into the cazuela.



WHY THIS WORKS

The thawing-bag liquor is pure gelatin-rich fish essence — traditional Basque cooks treat it as a bonus ingredient, not waste. Pre-patting dry removes the surface water film that would steam during the oil confit + dilute the sauce.

2 Phase 2 · Aromatic Infusion — 4 minutes

1. Place cazuela with oil + garlic + guindilla on the lowest burner (or induction at 80-90W).
2. Insert thermometer. Target: 65°C / 150°F.
3. Warm slowly. Garlic should sizzle very gently; turn from white to faint gold over 3-4 minutes. Do NOT brown — brown garlic is bitter garlic.
4. As soon as garlic shows faint gold: use a slotted spoon to remove garlic coins + guindilla to a small plate. Reserve.
5. Verify oil temperature still at 65°C. If higher, pull cazuela off heat 20-30 sec.



WHY THIS WORKS

Cross-reference: bacalao-al-pil-pil Phase 2 — same aromatic-infusion technique. 65°C for cocochas vs 70°C for bacalao is the only parameter difference. The lower temperature also means the garlic takes slightly longer to reach faint gold — 4 minutes vs bacalao's 3 minutes. Watch carefully.

3

Phase 3 · The 65°C Confit — 6-7 minutes

1. With aromatics removed + oil at 65°C: gently add cocochas to the cazuela. Arrange in a single layer if possible; slight overlap is OK for 400 g.
2. Maintain 65°C strictly — pull cazuela on/off heat every 30-60 seconds if needed. Do not exceed 67°C.
3. Do not stir. Do not flip. The cocochas confit from underneath.
4. Watch the oil: after ~3 minutes, you should see milky-white threads of gelatin beginning to release from the cocochas into the oil. This is exactly what you want.
5. After 6 minutes, check one cocochas: the flesh should look opaque (pearlescent white) and the piece should barely flake when pressed with a spoon. If still translucent-pink: 60 more seconds.
6. At 6-7 minutes: cocochas are done. Use a slotted spoon to remove them all to a warm plate. Work quickly — they cool fast.



WHY THIS WORKS

At 65°C, cocochas' collagen dissolves rapidly (faster than bacalao's at 70°C because the gelatin is more concentrated in the throat pieces than in cod skin). The gelatin-rich milky liquor that pools in the oil is the emulsion-ready material. Keeping the temperature at exactly 65°C prevents the thin muscle membrane from tightening + the flesh from drying out. Cocochas are more delicate than bacalao loin — treat them gently.

4

Phase 4 · Cool-Down — 45 to 60 seconds (Faster Than Bacalao)

1. Remove cazuela entirely from heat source.
2. Watch thermometer. Cocochas' oil has more gelatin dissolved than bacalao's oil, so it cools slightly slower — but the target window (50-60°C) is also narrower.
3. Target: 50-60°C, typically reached in 45-60 seconds in a cazuela de barro (faster in a stainless pan).
4. DO not start swirling until you're in the window. Too hot = emulsion won't form; too cool = gelatin re-solidifies.



WHY THIS WORKS

Cross-reference: bacalao-al-pil-pil Phase 4. Cocochas' emulsion window (50-60°C) is 5°C lower than bacalao's (55-65°C) because the higher gelatin concentration shifts the stability zone down. Above 60°C the emulsion breaks from too much dissolved protein; below 50°C the gelatin crashes out.

5

Phase 5 · The Swirl — 90 seconds to 2 minutes (Faster Than Bacalao)

1. Return cocochas to the cazuela (off-heat). Arrange them in a single layer.
2. Hold cazuela by its handles. Begin slow circular motions — clockwise, about one full circle every 2 seconds. Do NOT stir with a spoon.
3. Within 30 seconds: the oil should start showing the classic pil-pil transition — clear gold → cloudy pale yellow → thick silky cream.
4. At 60-90 seconds: sauce should be visibly thick, clinging to the cocochas. This is dramatically faster than bacalao (which takes 3-4 min).
5. If the sauce isn't thickening at 90 seconds (rare): add ½ tsp of the reserved cocochas liquor. Continue swirling. Should thicken within 30 sec more.
6. At 90 sec - 2 min: sauce is at full body. The cazuela should show a silky pale yellow cream clinging to each throat piece, with extra sauce pooled around them. Stop swirling.



WHY THIS WORKS

Cocochas have roughly 3× the gelatin content of bacalao skin (per-weight basis). More gelatin = more emulsifier = faster emulsion formation. Where bacalao needs 3-4 minutes of swirling, cocochas builds full body in 90 seconds to 2 minutes. The risk is over-swirling past the peak — keep watch and stop when the sauce has body, not when your arms are tired.

6

Phase 6 · Plate + Serve — 1 minute

1. Transfer cocochas directly from cazuela to warm serving plate — use a spoon, lift them in their sauce, pile them slightly in the center.
2. Spoon additional sauce generously over them and in a pool around.
3. Scatter the reserved gold garlic coins on top.
4. Finely chopped parsley — a small pinch scattered across.
5. A tiny flake of fleur de sel on each cocochas.
6. Serve immediately with bread. The sauce is the best part; guests will sop every drop.



WHY THIS WORKS

The finished dish is stable at serving temp (55-70°C) but degrades below 45°C as the gelatin re-solidifies. Plate and serve within 2-3 minutes of cazuela removal. Warm plates are essential.

QUICK REFERENCE

Timing Cheat Sheet

STEP	TIME	CUE
Thaw cocochas	T- 2 4 h	Overnight in fridge in original bag
Mise + prep	T- 1 5 m	Pat cocochas dry; reserve liquor; slice garlic
Warm oil + aromatics	T- 1 0 m to T- 6 m	65°C, garlic to faint gold
Remove aromatics	T- 6 m	Garlic + guindilla to plate
Confit cocochas	T- 5 m to T+ 1 m	65°C, 6-7 min, no stir
Remove cocochas	T+ 1 m	Slotted spoon to warm plate
Cool cazuela	T+ 1 m to T+ 1 m 4 5 s	To 50-60°C window (narrower than bacalao)
Return cocochas + swirl	T+ 2 m to T+ 3 m 3 0 s	Off-heat, 90s-2min, emulsion forms fast
Plate + garnish + serve	T+ 3 m 3 0 s to T+ 4 m	Sauce over, garlic coins, parsley, salt, bread

TROUBLESHOOTING

Emergency Protocols

 UNDEFINED

undefined

 UNDEFINED

undefined

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undefined

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DEEP DIVES

Technique Notes

● Universal: Cocochas vs Bacalao — The Same Technique at Different Scales

PIL-PIL DIPTYCH · CROSS-TECHNIQUE

Bacalao al pil-pil (Batch 8 · this workspace) and cocochas al pil-pil are the same technique family but with different temperature + time parameters scaled to ingredient characteristics. Bacalao: 70°C × 8 min confit, 55-65°C emulsion window, 3-4 min swirl — because loin has moderate gelatin + thick muscle. Cocochas: 65°C × 6-7 min confit, 50-60°C emulsion window, 90s-2min swirl — because throats have 3× more gelatin + delicate muscle. Master bacalao first; cocochas is the more forgiving dish because the gelatin abundance does most of the work. Both teach the same emulsion physics: gelatin + oil + mechanical agitation + correct temperature window = stable emulsion without eggs, starch, or dairy. Reference: Emulsion Encyclopedia §Gelatin Emulsions; Spanish Foundations §Pil-Pil Tradition.

● Universal: The Gelatin Concentration Principle

PROTEIN SCIENCE · CROSS-RECIPE

High-collagen ingredients release gelatin at lower temperatures + in higher quantities than moderate-collagen ingredients. Ingredients ranked by gelatin density: cocochas (throat pockets) > pig trotters > oxtail > fish skin > chicken feet > bacalao loin. The corresponding temperature reductions for gelatin extraction: cocochas need only 65°C; pig trotters release at 75°C+; oxtail at 82°C+. This principle extends to: cocochas pil-pil (this), beurre-monté with added veal-stock (restaurant technique), salsa pil-pil con cocochas y callos (advanced dish that combines them), and any emulsion where you want to add body without dairy/egg. Reference: Protein Encyclopedia §Collagen Density; Cross-Technique §Natural Thickeners.

● Universal: The ●-Only Ingredient Ethics

RECIPE ETHICS · SOURCING INTEGRITY

Cross-reference: lobster-butter-poached-sv (Batch 9 · this workspace). Some ingredients have no legitimate Tier A substitute — the technique requires the specific ingredient + no cheaper path preserves the pedagogy. For these: ship as ●-only, state it explicitly in adaptationIntro, and provide a 'if you can't source this, make Dish X instead' pointer. Current ●-only in library: cocochas (this recipe — pointer: bacalao pil-pil), lobster-butter-poached-sv (Batch 9 — no alternative pointer since the technique is unique). Avoiding tier-integrity violations means not pretending grocery-substitute versions work when they don't. Respect the dish and the cook. Reference: Recipe Ethics §Tier Discipline.

● **Basque Tradition: The Cazuela as Pil-Pil Instrument (Reinforced)**

VESSEL SCIENCE · CROSS-RECIPE

Cross-reference: bacalao-al-pil-pil ● cazuela card. For cocochas specifically, a smaller cazuela (18-20 cm vs bacalao's 20-22 cm) is preferred: cocochas pack more tightly, and a smaller vessel means more concentrated gelatin release + more focused heat retention for the narrower emulsion window. If using the same cazuela for both dishes, the 20-22 cm works fine for cocochas too — just reduce oil volume proportionally. The cazuela de barro is one of the three essential Spanish vessels (alongside paellera + cast-iron plancha); if you cook Spanish regularly, buying all three pays off within a month. Reference: Spanish Foundations §Clay Vessels; Kamado Technique §Plancha Setup.

● **Universal: The 40% Oil Rule (Reinforced)**

OIL-FORWARD DISHES · CROSS-SPANISH

Cross-reference: bacalao-al-pil-pil + merluza-a-la-plancha-refrito + pulpo-sv-plancha (all in library). When a dish is 40%+ olive oil by flavor, oil quality matters more than nearly any other ingredient upgrade. Pil-pil (any variant) + gambas al ajillo + tortilla española + grilled vegetables + ceviches — all in this category. For cocochas specifically, Spanish Arbequina's softer-buttery profile lets the fish gelatin shine; Picual's peppery profile provides a counter but changes the dish direction. Both are valid; choose based on whether you want pure-fish focus (Arbequina) or contrast (Picual). Tier A California Olive Ranch Arbequina works; Tier B Rincón de la Subbética is the Saturday-night choice. Reference: Olive Oil Atlas §Spanish Varieties; Flavor Architecture §Oil-Forward Dishes.

● **Universal: The Reserved-Liquor Insurance Pattern**

SV + EMULSION SAFETY NETS

Always reserve 1-2 tbsp of the cocochas thawing liquor as emulsion insurance. This mirrors: bacalao pil-pil's reserved desalination water (Batch 8), SV lobster's bag-butter as serving sauce (Batch 9), salmorejo's reserved bread-water if sauce goes thin (Batch 10). Every emulsion-based recipe benefits from a reserve of the primary liquid the emulsifier is dissolved in. Use conservatively — 1/2 tsp at a time — to stabilize an emulsion that's not coming together. This pattern is universal and should be standard practice: always save some of the starting liquid as insurance before committing to full-speed blending or emulsification. Reference: Emulsion Encyclopedia §Safety Nets; Sauces & Condiments §Rescue Techniques.

● **Basque Tradition: The Pil-Pil Canon Completed**

REGIONAL DISH CATALOG · SPANISH

Traditional Basque pil-pil variants: (1) bacalao al pil-pil (Batch 8 · this workspace) — the classic + pedagogical entry, (2) cocochas al pil-pil (this recipe) — the summit, (3) gambas al pil-pil — quick weeknight variant using shrimp + their oil, (4) chipirones al pil-pil — squid-stuffed version (advanced). All share the 4-ingredient identity (protein + olive oil + garlic + guindilla) + the off-heat swirl emulsion. Master bacalao first, cocochas second, and the other variants become obvious extensions. The pil-pil canon represents Basque cuisine at its most pure + minimalist — no reductions, no butters, no starches, just gelatin physics + Basque ingredients. Reference: Spanish Foundations §Basque Tradition; Recipe Families §Pil-Pil Variants.

What to Drink

Wine — The Basque Match (Reinforced)

Tier B: Txomin Etxaniz Txakoli de Getaria — the regional wine. Alternative: Pazo Baión Albariño

Cross-reference: bacalao-al-pil-pil wine pairing. Same answer — Txakoli for Basque authenticity + Albariño as Spanish substitute. Both cut the richness of the pil-pil sauce with bright acidity + minerality. Cocochas' richer sauce actually wants even sharper acidity than bacalao's — Txakoli's petillance is ideal.

Wine — The Red Contrarian

Young Rioja Crianza, served at 16°C (not room-temp, not fridge-cold)

Cross-reference: bacalao-al-pil-pil red pairing. The medium-body + bright acidity of young Rioja matches richer pil-pil sauces beautifully. For cocochas specifically — with even more sauce body than bacalao — the red choice holds up better than some would expect. Insider's Basque pairing.

Bread — The Absolute Essential

Pan de payés (Batch 7) or crusty Basque country loaf

Cocochas pil-pil produces more sauce per gram of protein than almost any Spanish dish. That sauce is the best part. Bread is not optional — it's the tool for ensuring no sauce is wasted. Slice thick, grill briefly over the kamado or on a plancha. Non-negotiable.

Side — Spare and Bitter

A simple arugula or bitter-greens salad with sherry vinegar + olive oil + salt

The dish is rich, gelatin-heavy, concentrated. Side should cut + reset. Bitter-greens salad (arugula, radicchio, escarole) dressed with acid is the counter-point. Avoid: creamy sides (redundant), starchy sides beyond bread (duplicative), tomato-heavy sides (wrong direction).

🔥 Menu Arc — Basque Night

Open: gildas + jamón. Middle: cocochas al pil-pil (this). Main: chuletón reverse-sear (already in library). Close: tarta de queso vasca (Batch 6).

Full Basque-night arc with cocochas as the technique-showpiece middle course. Pacing is right: sharp acidic opener → rich pil-pil → fire-driven main → San Sebastián dessert. Serves 4-6. Champagne / Txakoli / Rioja rotation.

CONTEXT

Menu Ideas

Celebration Dinner · 4 guests · Basque Summit

1. Gildas + Fino sherry (arrival). 2. Cocochas al pil-pil (this recipe, centerpiece tapa). 3. Chuletón reverse-sear + cachelos. 4. Tarta de queso vasca (Batch 6). Txakoli + Rioja rotation. The full Basque summit night.

Pil-Pil Diptych Dinner · 4 guests · Technique Teaching

1. Bacalao al pil-pil (Batch 8 · pedagogical entry). 2. Cocochas al pil-pil (this recipe · the summit). Plus bread + salad + wine. A two-course evening that teaches pil-pil at its most accessible + its most spectacular, back-to-back. Pedagogical genius.

Tapa Night · 6-8 guests

Scale portions: 2-3 cocochas per guest as part of a 5-6 tapa spread. Alongside: mejillones escabeche (Batch 5), jamón, padrón, pan de payés. Tapa-scale cocochas pil-pil + Txakoli = a genuine Basque bar experience at home.

Intimate Dinner · 2 guests

Scale 200 g cocochas for 2 as a full main course with bread + salad + good wine. 25-min active cook. A ●-occasion weeknight when the freezer has a pack from La Tienda and Pablo wants to demonstrate technique.

YOUR NOTES

Cook Log

Session Notes

Date: _____ · Serves: _____ · Rating: __ / 5

Use this space to record what you changed, what worked, and what you'd do differently next time. Your future self will thank you.



Stop following recipes. Start understanding food.

