

## *Savory Rice Pudding*

*¼ cup extra virgin olive oil  
1 large white onion, peeled and cut into slivers  
3 gloves minced garlic  
1 28 ounce can whole plum tomatoes in juice, coarsely pureed  
1 15 ounce can diced tomatoes in juice  
6 poblano chiles, roasted, peeled, seeded and cut into thin strips  
1 tsp dried Mexican oregano  
2 bay leaves  
a pinch of sugar  
salt and freshly ground pepper to taste.*

*Heat the oil in a medium saucepan. Saute' the onions and garlic until softened and slightly browned. Add tomatoes, stir in the chile strips and cook another 5 minutes. Season with oregano, salt, pepper, and sugar to taste. Simmer for 20 minutes until slightly thickened.*

### *Cream Sauce:*

*2 cups crème fraiche  
2 cups plain yogurt  
Salt and freshly ground pepper to taste*

*Stir together the crème fraiche and yogurt. Season to taste with salt and pepper*

### *Assembly:*

*1 ½ cups grated mozzarella cheese  
1 ½ cups grated Monterey Jack cheese  
6 cups cooked long grain white rice (2 cups raw)*

*Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Butter a large baking dish  
Toss the mozzarella and Monterey Jack cheeses together in a bowl and refrigerate  
Spoon half the rice into the dish and smooth evenly. Cover with half the tomato sauce and half the cream sauce. Spread half the cheese over the cream. Repeat with the remaining rice, sauce, and cream. Reserve the remaining cheese. Lightly cover the casserole with foil and bake about 30 minutes, until heated through. Uncover the casserole and sprinkle the remaining cheese. Return the casserole to the oven and bake for 10 to 15 minutes more to melt the cheese.*

*Makes 12 to 14 servings*