

Try these at home and bring in the finished product for the class to taste. The fried plantain is simple and quick to make and can be done with your class, depending on their age and how responsible they are. Vegetarians can have the groundnut soup without the meat, or the binch akara. Fried plantain is also suitable for vegetarians.

## Fried Plantain

*Sierra Leone and most of the rest of Africa!*

For a class of 30, you will need:

- 8-10 large plantains
- 2 cups of oil (*Use peanut or soybean oil as they don't smoke as much as vegetable oil or sunflower oil.*)
- Seasoning (see below).

You can usually find plantains in supermarkets in larger cities or in Caribbean or Central American markets. They look like large green bananas.

*These fried treats are found for sale as snack foods in markets throughout sub-Saharan Africa. Usually they are just sprinkled with salt and hot sauce (Tabasco works!), but sometimes they are coated with powdered ginger and/or cayenne before frying and then salted. If you prefer a sweet taste, you can sprinkle them with cinnamon.*

- 1 Peel and slice the plantains (about 1cm thick)  
Season accordingly:  
Sweet – sprinkle with cinnamon before frying  
Savoury – add salt before frying
- 2 Heat 1 cup of oil in a saucepan
- 3 Once the oil is hot, add plantain (not too many at once) and fry until they are golden on the outside but not burnt
- 4 Remove from oil with a slotted spoon and dry on kitchen paper – best eaten warm!

## Groundnut Stew

*In Shawn's film, he eats this after a hard day at school*

- 1 pound stewing meat
- 2 large tomatoes, diced
- 1/2 cup oil
- 1/4 cup groundnut paste (peanut butter)
- 1/2 tsp seasoning
- 1 large onion, chopped or sliced
- 1 large pepper, seeded and finely chopped
- 1/2 tsp cayenne pepper, optional
- salt to taste

*Vegetarian option – omit meat and start with the oil, peppers and onions – delicious!*

- 1 Season meat with special meat seasoning. Let it absorb for three hours.
- 2 Brown meat in oil. Add some water and simmer until tender. Remove and set aside.

- 3 In the same oil, sauté pepper and onions. Add tomatoes and stir briskly.
- 4 Mix groundnut paste with 1/2 cup water to form a thin paste and add to stew.
- 5 Stir, add meat, salt to taste and let simmer 15 minutes over low heat.
- 6 Serve with rice, boiled yam, cassava and a choice of green vegetables.

## West African Lemony Chicken and Okra Soup

*serves 4 to 6*

- 1 large chicken, cut into pieces
- Juice from 2 large lemons
- 6 cups chicken broth or water
- 3 tomatoes, peeled and chopped
- 1 can tomato paste
- 1 large onion, peeled, chopped and browned in a little oil
- 1 teaspoon cayenne pepper
- 2 teaspoons salt
- 1 cup uncooked long-grain rice
- 1 teaspoon pepper and 1 teaspoon ground turmeric
- 2 cups sliced okra, fresh or frozen\*

*\*A note on okra: if you have never cooked with okra, you are in for a new experience. Most recipes, especially West African ones, would call for the okra to be added at the beginning, as it serves as an excellent thickener for the stew. Some people would prefer to add it at the next step because okra can have a somewhat slimy texture after it stews, although it is usually not too apparent in a dish like this. So either add it with everything else, or add it in the next step when you return the chicken to the pot.*

- 1 Rub pieces of chicken with juice from lemons. You can remove skin from the pieces if you prefer less fat. Put the pieces in a covered container in the refrigerator to marinate for no more than 30 minutes.
- 2 While chicken is marinating, saute the onion in a little oil to make the flavour milder. Set aside.
- 3 Remove the chicken from the refrigerator. Place the chicken in a large pan with the chicken broth or water. Bring to a boil, then lower the heat and cook slowly, covered, for 12 minutes.
- 4 Add onions, tomatoes, tomato paste, rice, spices and salt and pepper. Cook for 30 minutes, until the chicken and rice are tender.
- 5 Remove chicken pieces and debone as soon as they are cool enough to handle. Return the chicken to the pan (along with the sliced okra if you waited) and stir until everything is well mixed (and the okra is tender). Serve over additional rice, with some fresh fruit for dessert.

## Binch Akara

serves 4 to 6

- 1lb black-eyed beans
  - 2 tsp salt
  - 1 small onion, very finely chopped
  - 2 cups oil
- 1 Pour dry beans in a blender with a cup of water. Chop for one minute. Pour in to a large bowl and add water. Stir until skins float. Strain into colander; allow all skin and eyes to flow out.
  - 2 Blend beans, onion and pepper. Pour in a bowl, add salt, and stir with a wooden spoon for two minutes.
  - 3 Heat oil until moderately hot. Drop mixture into oil with spoon. Fry until golden brown. Drain on absorbent paper.
  - 4 Small balls can be served with toothpicks.

## Chicken Stew

serves 4 to 6

- 2lbs stewing chicken (thighs, legs, drumsticks etc)
  - 1 tsp salt
  - 1/2 tsp black pepper
  - 1/2 tsp chicken seasoning
  - 1 tsp garlic powder
  - 2 cups oil
  - 1 large pepper, seeded and chopped
  - 2 large onions
  - 4 oz tomato paste
  - 2 tbsp lemon juice (juice of 1/2 lemon)
  - 1 large tomato, chopped or diced
- 1 Skin and trim fat from chicken. Cut 8 to 10 pieces. Rub in lemon juice. Rinse and drain chicken. Add spices and rub into chicken. Refrigerate for 10 hours.
  - 2 Heat oil and brown chicken.
  - 3 Sauté onions and pepper for 1/2 hour; add tomato and tomato paste. Stir to distribute evenly. Add salt to taste.
  - 4 Add chicken and 1/2 cup water.
  - 5 Simmer over low heat 10-15 minutes until chicken is tender.
  - 6 Serve with rice, boiled cassava, boiled yam or bread.