



Dining for Women

Food & Recipes - Mali, Africa December 2011

The temperatures are cooling down everywhere in the Northern hemisphere, and it's a good time to try some soups and stews with your Dining for Women group. These three recipes are hearty and spicy and will warm you up body and soul.

Tiguadege Na is the national dish of Mali, and everyone eats it, or some version of it. I have provided you with two recipes for it, one with meat, and one vegetarian alternative. The okra bean soup is also very typical of the region of Africa and is delicious!

Tiguadege Na (Meat in Peanut Sauce)

Recipe provided by Moussa Diallo for Putumayo World Music's *Mali* CD and adapted by Keith Ng-anga-Hackett, former Peace Corp volunteer to Mali

Serves 8

Ingredients:

2 Tbsp. oil

2 lb. beef, lamb or, for the adventurous, goat, cubed, off the bone, or 2 lb. chicken meat in pieces or parts

2 onions, chopped

2 large garlic cloves, peeled and chopped

salt and pepper to taste

1 can chopped tomatoes, or 4 large tomatoes, seeded, peeled and chopped

2 tsp. tomato paste

4 cups vegetable, chicken or beef broth

4 Tbs. peanut butter

1 Tsp. Herbes de Provence (a blend of thyme, bay leaves, rosemary, cloves, sage, marjoram, basil, etc. that can be found in most spice sections)

2 carrots, cut into large chunks

2 potatoes, cut into large chunks

1 egg plant, chopped

Heat the oil in a sauce over high heat. Add the meat and brown well on all sides. Add the onions and garlic, season with salt and pepper, and continue to cook, stirring, until the onions have softened. Add the canned or fresh tomatoes and their juice and tomato paste. Bring the mixture to a boil, then reduce the heat, and let it simmer for a few minutes, stirring occasionally. Add the broth, peanut butter, Herbes de Provence, and stir until mixed. Add the vegetables and season to taste with salt and pepper. Cover the pot, and let simmer over low heat for about 1 hour. Serve over rice.

Tigua Dege Na (Vegetarian Stew in Peanut Sauce)

Recipe provided by Betsy Newcomer, former Peace Corp volunteer to Mali

Serves 5-6

Ingredients

1 tablespoon oil
3 small onions, chopped
6 cloves garlic, minced
1 large (28-ounce) can diced tomatoes
1 (6-ounce) can tomato paste
1-1/2 cups vegetable broth
1/3 cup smooth peanut butter (sometimes I add extra peanut butter)
1/4 teaspoon cayenne pepper (or more to taste)
1 teaspoon salt (may reduce if broth is very salty)
1 teaspoon black pepper
2 bay leaves
1 acorn squash, peeled and cubed
1/2 medium cabbage, cut into thin strips (or a 10-14 oz. bag of cole slaw, or a large bag of fresh spinach)

Directions:

1. In a large pot, heat oil. Add and saute onions and garlic until translucent.
2. Add diced tomatoes, tomato paste, vegetable broth, peanut butter, cayenne pepper, salt, pepper, bay leaves, and squash.
3. Bring to a boil. Add the cabbage (or spinach).
4. Cook until the squash is tender, about 30 minutes. Stir frequently to prevent peanut butter from sticking to the bottom of the pot. Serve over rice.

Okra Bean Soup

Adapted from *Zainabu's African Cookbook with Food and Stories*, by Zainabu Kpaka Kallon

Serves 4-6

Ingredients:

1 lb. ground beef
1 pound black-eyed peas, fresh or canned, rinsed
1 large onion, chopped
2 large fresh tomatoes, chopped
3-4 red hot chili peppers, chopped
ground black pepper to taste
2 gloves garlic, crushed
salt to taste
2 lb. okra, washed, end removed, and sliced

Put the meat in a large, heavy cooking pot, brown lightly. Add the beans and all the other ingredients except for the okra. Add enough water to cover everything, cover, and bring to a boil. Cook over a reduced heat, stirring occasionally, for about 10 minutes, then add the okra, and cook over low heat an additional 10 minutes. Serve hot.

Plantain and Coconut Stew

From *The Soul of a New Cuisine: A Discovery of the Foods and Flavors of Africa*, by Marcus Samuelsson

Serves 4-6

Ingredients

1 medium Spanish onion, roughly chopped

1 cup coconut milk

the juice of 2 limes

2 Tablespoons white wine vinegar

½ cup peanut or canola oil

5 yellow plantains, peeled, quartered and cut into 1 inch pieces

2 teaspoons chopped cilantro

½ teaspoon ground ginger

½ teaspoon salt

Freshly ground pepper

Combine the onion, chilies, coconut milk, lime juice and vinegar in a medium saucepan and bring to a simmer over low heat. Simmer for 10 minutes, then remove from heat and set aside. Heat the oil in a large frying pan over medium heat; add the plantain and fry for 1-15 minutes, turning now and then so it browns. Remove the plantain and drain on paper towel. Add the plantain, cilantro, and ginger to the coconut milk mixture, and bring to a boil. Serve immediately, with salt and pepper to taste.

Etiquette and Customs:

Malians typically eat with their hands, around a community bowl. Most dishes are either rice dishes with sauce and meat or millet dishes with sauce. I saw children often ate with the head of the family (father), sharing the same communal bowl. Some families did use plates and utensils.

Malians are very hospitable and welcoming to guests and often encourage guests to eat a hearty meal. If you stop eating, usually you will be encouraged to eat more, and the more you eat, the more pleased your hosts are. It is also valued to be fuller-figured rather than skinny, so if you are told you look big, that's a compliment. Women usually do all the cooking over a coal or wood fire.

Etiquette and Customs by Betsy Newcomer, former Peace Corp volunteer to Mali

Recipes researched and provided by Karen O'Brien