

Soul food cookbook includes interesting histories

In Melvett Chambers' cookbook "Soul Cookin' Southern Style" the genius of black people to evolve African cooking to a purely American style is explored. Soul food was created through the need of survival to be economic, simple and creative. The following recipes and information are from that cookbook.

Chitterling "Chit'lins"
Chit'lins are the small intestines of pigs. This dish is considered a special treat on Thanksgiving, Christmas and New Year's by many families.

2 cups white vinegar
10 pounds chitlins
2 medium onions, chopped
2 teaspoons crushed red pepper
2 cloves garlic, chopped
1 teaspoon black pepper
4 cups water
salt to taste
Fill a large basin with cold water and add vinegar. Drop in chitlins and soak for 30 minutes. Drain and refill with cold water. Peel off fat from the chitlins. Turn the chitlins inside out and peel off the fat there too. Drain water and discard the fat. Rinse chitlins under cold running water. Soak chitlins in fresh cold water for two hours, changing the



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• postscript

water several times. Check chitlins to make sure they are free of dirt.

Place in a large pot. Add onions, red pepper, garlic and black pepper. Cover with water and bring to a boil over high heat. Cover, reduce heat to low and simmer for 3 to 4 hours or until tender. Serves 4.

Hash
1 tablespoon lard or shortening
1 onion, chopped
1 bell pepper, chopped
3 medium potatoes, diced fine
1 tablespoon flour
2 cups hot water
2 cups cubed beef, chicken or pork roast cooked
salt and pepper to taste
Place shortening in hot skillet. Sauté onion, bell pepper and potatoes until tender but not brown. Add flour to thicken and when browned add water and meat. Cook until sauce is thick and potatoes are done about 20 minutes. Salt and pepper to taste. Serves 4.

Ashcake
This is a real old Louisiana bread. It was baked in an open hearth using hot wood ashes.

4 cups fine corn meal
2 teaspoon salt
1 tablespoon shortening
boiling water
Combine the ingredients. Make into a soft dough by adding boiling water and mixing well. Mold into oval mounds by hand leaving the impression of your fingers across each. Bake in preheated oven at 435 degrees until brown.

How to Bake in Ashes
Build a roaring wood fire in the fireplace. When enough ashes have accumulated, sweep a clean place on the hearth. Draw out a pile of hot ashes. Place oval mounds of dough on top of the ashes. Cover with more hot ashes and let bake to a nice brown. Be sure fire is kept going to

keep ashes hot. When brown, draw cakes out of ashes, wipe or dust lightly clinging ashes from baked bread. Serve hot with butter and molasses or syrup.

Hoe Cakes
Hoe cake got its name from slaves who cooked small flat pieces of cornbread on the flat side of a field hoe over an open fire.
1 cup white cornmeal
1 cup all-purpose flour
1 teaspoon salt
2 teaspoons baking powder
2 cup milk
bacon drippings
Combine the ingredients and add enough milk to make a stiff batter. Heat bacon drippings in a heavy skillet until hot. Form small flat cakes. Fry cakes on medium low heat until brown on both sides turning only once. Serves 8.

Whiskey Sauce
1 stick butter
1 1/2 cups powdered sugar
1 egg yolk

1 teaspoon vanilla
1/2 cup Bourbon
Cream butter and sugar over medium heat until butter is absorbed. Remove from heat, blend in egg

yolk, add vanilla and pour in Bourbon, stirring constantly. Serve warm over bread pudding. Serves 12.

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