

BLACK HISTORY MONTH.

HISTORY BEHIND THE MEAL

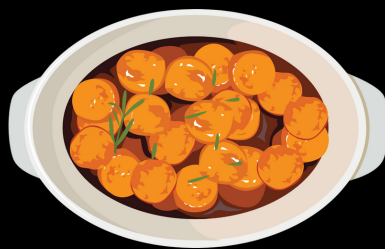


Black History Month is an opportunity to learn more about the heritage and contributions of Black people. There is a strong link between Black history and food, with many elements of African culinary history making their way into African American recipes and American food as a whole. The Jamaican inspired meal being offered on February 19th is our way of celebrating foods from the Black diaspora and honoring the African and Caribbean cultures that influenced the foods we enjoy.



JERK CHICKEN & RICE AND PEAS

Roots date back to the slavery era on the Caribbean island. Maroons, who ran away from captivity, lived in the Blue Mountains and had to marinate their meat with spices and peppers to preserve it. The word jerk reportedly stems from the Spanish charqui, similar to the modern-day jerky. Jamaican Rice and Peas is a dish that is derived from Waakye, a simple savory rice and beans dish native to northern Ghana.



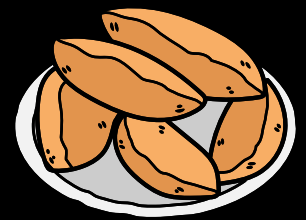
YAMS VS. SWEET POTATOES

Yams were a staple food in West Africa. The mix-up of yams vs sweet potatoes is rooted in the transatlantic slave trade. Eventually sweet potatoes would become a major Southern crop. Enslaved Black people would make “candied yams”, puddings, and the ever-important sweet potato pie with them.



BANANA PUDDING

The Transatlantic Slave Trade also brought goods and foods, and the banana plant was a major staple that was brought to Caribbean shores. The first bananas were likely more like plantains. Banana pudding is not an exclusively Black American invention, but it is still a major dessert in Soul Food.



FESTIVAL

Jamaican Festival, also known as sweet dumplings, is a popular street food in Jamaica. a mixture of cornmeal, flour, sugar, and spices, and is deep-fried until it is golden brown and crispy on the outside, but soft and fluffy on the inside. The origin of the Jamaican Festival dates back to the 18th century when enslaved Africans in Jamaica were given cornmeal to make their own food.

FOR QUESTIONS, PLEASE REACH OUT TO: HR@RHC.NET

<https://540westmain.org/black-history-month-food-and-traditions/>
<https://jerktaVERN.com/the-best-authentic-jamaican-festival-sweet-dumpling/>
<https://www.britannica.com/topic/jerk-chicken>
<https://bigdeliciouslife.com/jamaican-rice-and-peas/>