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AFRICAN-INSPIRED SWEET POTATO AND PEANUT SOUP

SERVES 8-10

Our regional Chesapeake cuisine owes much of its heritage to the cooking of Africa. The spice blends of the Caribbean and a touch of spiciness take the humble sweet potato and peanut and transforms them into a complex, hearty soup. To make this dish a complete meal, I often add a couple of extra sweet potatoes for a thicker, more stew-like consistency and serve it over brown rice or whatever grain I may have on hand.

INGREDIENTS

2 tablespoons olive oil
1 large onion, diced
½ teaspoon hot pepper flakes
4 cloves garlic, minced
3 tablespoons fresh minced ginger
2 teaspoons ground cumin
2 teaspoons ground cinnamon
1 ½ teaspoons ground coriander
¼ teaspoon ground cloves
4 ripe medium tomatoes, cored and diced
or one 14 ½ ounce can diced tomatoes
2 pounds sweet potatoes, peeled and
coarsely chopped
2 medium carrots, peeled and diced
5 cups water or veggie stock
2 tablespoons local honey
1 teaspoon salt
½ cup chopped, unsalted, roasted peanuts
¼ cup creamy peanut butter
Chopped cilantro, for topping
Chopped toasted peanuts, for topping

DIRECTIONS

- 1 | Heat the olive oil in a large pot and sauté onions until lightly browned, about 6 to 8 minutes. Add the hot pepper flakes, garlic, ginger, cumin, cinnamon, coriander and cloves. Sauté for 5 minutes longer.
- 2 | Stir in the tomatoes, sweet potatoes and carrots. Pour in the water or stock, honey and salt. Bring to a boil, reduced the heat, and simmer for about 40 minutes, or until the sweet potatoes are tender.
- 3 | Remove from heat and stir in the chopped peanuts. Take out ½ of the soup and set aside. Puree the remaining soup and then pour back in the reserved soup. Reheat the soup and whisk in the peanut butter and adjust seasonings.
- 4 | Serve in bowls and top with cilantro and chopped peanuts.



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MRS. O'LINDER'S CRABBY (OR NOT) DEVILED EGGS

YIELDS 16 PIECES

Not so much plant-foward, but more like little protein bombs, Mrs. Joanne Linder, of Towson, Maryland is famous for her deviled eggs. And what's better than some local, lump crab lacing a dill-infused, old-fashioned deviled egg? Joanne doesn't call for it in this recipe, but I'm sure she wouldn't object to just a light sprinkle of Old Bay atop the eggs before serving, if you are not feeling crabby, this recipe makes awesome deviled eggs, sans crustacean.

INGREDIENTS

8, hard cooked eggs
1/3 cup sour cream, more if necessary
3 tablespoons minced chives
2 tablespoons white wine vinegar
1/2 teaspoon salt
Pinch of white pepper
2 tablespoons chopped dill
1/2 pound lump crabmeat
Dill sprigs for garnish, optional

DIRECTIONS

- 1** | Slice the hard cooked eggs in half lengthwise, and remove the yolks to a small bowl. Set the whites of the eggs on a tray or platter to await the filling.
- 2** | Mash the yolks well with a fork. Stir in the sour cream, chives, vinegar, salt, pepper and dill and mix together thoroughly. Using a rubber spatula, gently fold in half of the lump crabmeat, reserving the larger lumps for garnish.
- 3** | Spoon the mixture evenly into the egg whites. Top each one with a beautiful lump or two of crabmeat. Garnish with a small sprig of dill, if desired.



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CLASSIC BEIGNETS RECIPE

MAKES ABOUT 24 BEIGNETS

INGREDIENTS

1 pack dry yeast (1 ½ teaspoons)
1 ½ cups warm water
½ cup sugar
1 cup milk
2 eggs, beaten
2 teaspoons vanilla extract
4 tablespoons butter, melted
6 ½ to 7 cups flour
Vegetable oil for frying
Confectioners sugar for dusting

DIRECTIONS

- 1** | In a large bowl, dissolve yeast in warm water. Let sit for 5 minutes to allow the yeast to bloom.
- 2** | Add sugar, salt, eggs, milk, melted butter and mix well. Slowly add 4 cups of the flour and beat until smooth. Slowly beat in the remaining 2 ½ to 3 cups of flour, until it is a soft, not too sticky dough.
- 3** | Place the dough into a lightly oiled bowl, cover with a towel or plastic wrap and allow to rise for about 2 hours or doubled in bulk. Or, if desired, the dough can be covered and chilled in the refrigerator for up to 24 hours. Make sure to bring chilled dough to room temperature before rolling.
- 4** | On a well floured surface, roll out dough into rectangles, ⅛ inch thick. Cut into 2 ½ inch squares. Cover the cut out beignets with a towel or plastic and allow to rest for about 30 minutes.
- 5** | Fry in 360°F (180°C) hot oil. When nicely browned, remove with a slotted utensil onto paper towels to drain off excess grease. Dust generously with sifted confectioners sugar and serve.



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BLUEBERRY COMPOTE

INGREDIENTS

2 cups fresh or frozen blueberries
3 tablespoons water
¼ cup sugar or maple syrup
1 ½ teaspoons freshly squeezed
lemon juice
Zest of ½ lemon

DIRECTIONS

- 1 | Place 1 cup of blueberries, water, sugar or maple syrup, and lemon juice in a saucepan. Place over medium-high heat and bring almost to the boil. Cook for 3 minutes. Reduce the heat and add the additional cup of blueberries and lemon zest. Simmer for 5 minutes and then remove from heat.