

FLAVOUR



TOWN



RECIPES OF LIFE FLAVOUR TOWN

Food is vital for human survival and wellbeing, but its significance goes far beyond just nutrition. Food connects people, strangers and friends alike, through shared experiences and mutual understanding. It carries the spiritual essence of cultures and evokes nostalgia with every smell, bite and taste. Food is not just sustenance; it's a bridge, a bond and a story.

Recipes are more than instructions; they hold a deeper meaning, memories, emotions, and cultural spirit. Sharing food allows us to revisit the spaces, moments and the stories behind our food and the ways we prepare it serve as powerful connections that bind us to one another. The therapeutic idea 'Recipes of Life' was founded by Natalie Rudland-Wood. A lovely part of this approach is sharing stories, recipes, and meals in a group setting to enjoy the benefits of eating together, build resilience and explore personal memories.

This collection, titled Flavour Town, an edition of Recipes of Life at Shoreditch Trust, captures the essence of a group of participants of differing cultures who each shared a recipe that contained fond memories. The stories associated with each recipe are featured in this booklet.

Our gatherings to cook and exchange recipes sparked meaningful conversations and shared experiences that transcended our differences, creating a space for both exploration and connection. Through the power of cooking, eating and sharing stories the group found connection, humour, confidence, music and cultural connections. We'd be delighted if you can find some magic in these pages as we found in our cooking and eating together.

Shoreditch Trust

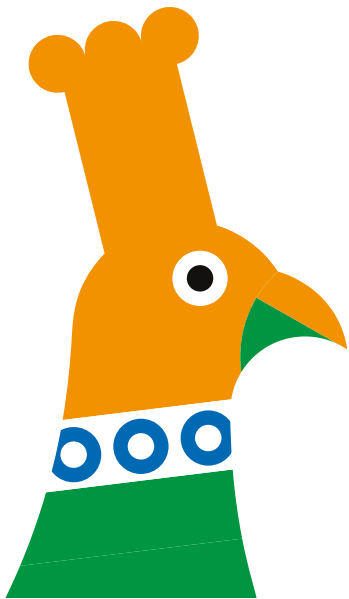
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SHARING OUR FAVOURITE DISHES

We began by sharing recipes close to our hearts — dishes that carry memories of where we first learned to cook them, who we shared them with, and why they remain our favourites.

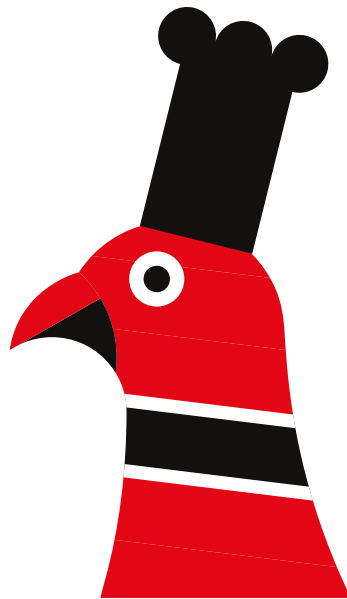


Srishti

INDIA

Dhal with White Basmati Rice

We cook our dhal in a pressure cooker (I wasn't sure if England would have a pressure cooker so I brought one with me even though it takes a lot of space in luggage). The sound of the whistle is nostalgic, cooks in 10 minutes. I cook it when sad, happy, hungry. I remember sitting on the balcony in the sun and eating.



Elizabeth

TRINIDAD & TOBAGO

Okra Rice & Stewed Chicken Neck

Growing up with my Aunt and cousins in a household of nine people, we mostly ate vegetarian meals. When we did eat a meal with meat, to me that was pretty exciting. My favourite meal as a child was okra and rice cook up with stewed chicken neck. My favorite part of the chicken to this day is the neck because it contains so much flavour.



Neil

ENGLAND

Bread & Butter Pudding

Milk, cream, butter, raisins... all baked in the oven until golden and the raisins would burn. Growing up in the '80s in England we ate chips and frozen or tinned vegetables. A real treat would be gammon (thick slices of ham), baked in the oven, wrapped in tin foil... add a slice of pineapple ring on the top! We'd only have rice once a month, when eating a chili con carne. These days, I eat rice six days a week. When I visit my parents, my mother will make me a chili con carne.

Joan

JAMAICA

Sweet Potato Pudding

Cooked by Grandma, grated potato, flour coconut milk, yam and spices.

Rundown

Saltfish or mackerel cooked in simmered-down coconut milk.

Ackee & Saltfish

When we didn't have meat, I would think we were poor, but now coming here, I realise we ate good (healthily). I want my jerk to be the last and celebratory meal of our group sessions.



Jamila

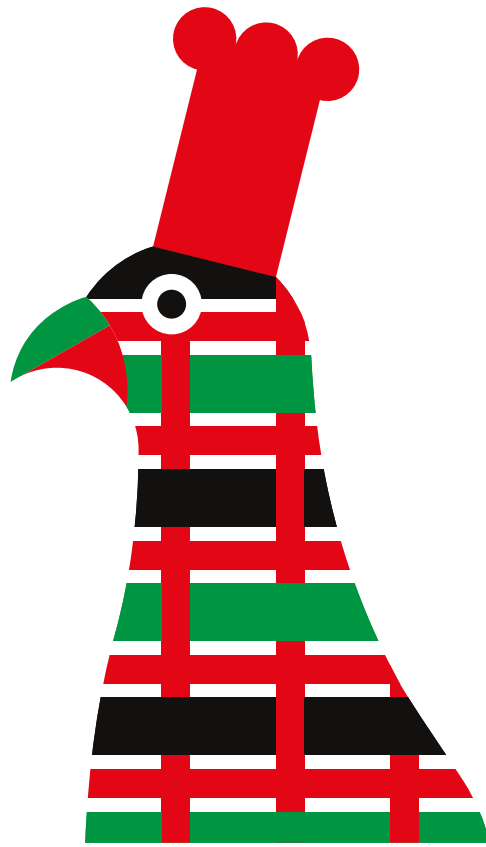
GAMBIA

Chocolate Chip Cookies

I made chocolate chip cookies together with my mother at home.

Jollof Rice

With chicken or meat, a bit spicy, what we eat at home together and on more special occasions. My mother cooks it.

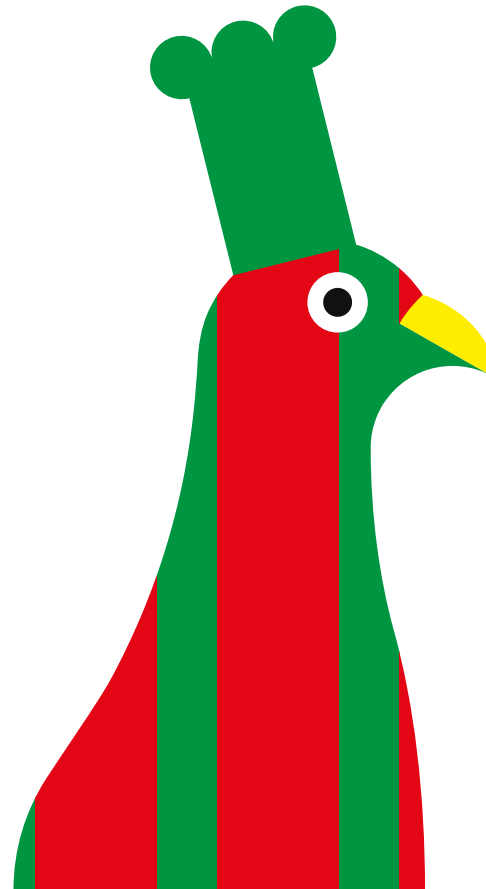


Mody

JORDAN & GEORGIA

Maqluba

Cooked with chicken or lamb, rice, garlic. I remember coming home from school, hungry, and my mother prepared maqluba. It's a different taste. I'm forgetting my traditional food as living in Georgia for eight years, with a big kitchen. My culture: rice, molokhia or maqluba, vegetarian, lots of vegetables. I asked my wife, who is Georgian, why she doesn't eat meat, only chicken, and she looks younger, even though she is 11 years older than me, healthy skin. "Everyone can cook but it's important to cook from inside" (gestures to the heart).

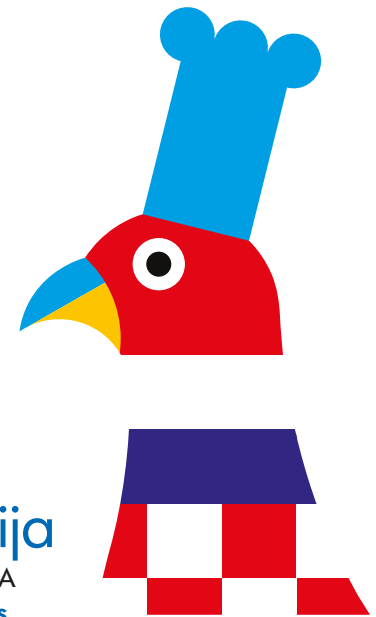


Catarina

PORTUGAL

Açorda à Alentejana

My grandmother, from the Alentejo region in southern Portugal, raised me. I spent summers in Evora with grandmother and ate açorda à alentejana [a Portuguese bread soup], made with old bread, like sourdough, broth with olive oil, cucumber, garlic, boiled egg (optional) and cod.



Silvija

CROATIA

Octopus

I grew up by the sea, the Adriatic and Mediterranean. Traditional octopus, fresh, same day, could smell the stone baked octopus, easy to get, not expensive, warm and sweet. Herbs and a little salt. People now say you should not eat octopus, because they are smart creatures. Would go with my dad to the fish market, 4/5am, we would keep the octopus and the fish in the bath alive. Remember playing with the octopus and mother saying only for an hour, as they would be eating it soon.

Liver

Another favourite dish is 'Tender Love' — my name for the liver dish that I have once a month as a treat; add garlic, some butter. Make it with chicken or lamb liver. Found the butcher at the mosque nearby sells fresh liver. Tastes quite sweet, add red wine or vinegar. Eat it with a potato side salad (boiled potato, yogurt). I learned to cook this using the principle of 'if you kill the animal, you should not waste anything'. My first food in London was Caribbean curry goat.

Chef Ken's

CHICKPEA COCONUT CURRY WITH LEMONDADE BREAD



Icebreaker dish — the dish that Chef Ken cooked for us during the first session, a favourite at Shoreditch Trust Community Table.

curry ingredients:

3 tins coconut milk (400ml each).
3 tins chickpeas (400g each), drained.
3 onions, chopped.
2 bell peppers, chopped into chunks.
2 tablespoons honey.
200g ghee.
3 bay leaves.
1 tablespoon cardamom pods.
3 sticks cinnamon.
3 tablespoons curry powder.
3 cups vegetable stock or broth.

Seed mix:

2 teaspoons cumin seeds.
2 teaspoons coriander seeds.

lemonade bread ingredients:

500g self-raising flour.
300ml lemonade.
2 tablespoons fenugreek seeds.
1 teaspoon salt.
Oil for deep frying.

curry method:

1. Toast the seed mix in a dry pan until fragrant.
2. In a separate pan, heat the ghee and fry the onions until golden brown. Add the cardamom pods, bay leaves, cinnamon sticks and bell pepper chunks.
3. Add the toasted seed mix, coconut milk, vegetable stock, honey and chickpeas. Stir well.
4. Simmer gently for 2 hours, stirring occasionally until thick and flavorful.

lemonade bread method:

1. Mix all the ingredients in a bowl.
2. Roll them together.
3. Flatten them out in disk shapes.
4. Deep fry for a minute and a half.

Neil's PIZZA



“When I was 19, I worked in a pizza takeaway, but pizzas were cooked from pre-packaged frozen readymade stock so I never learned how to make it myself. I avoided pizza as I did not like cheese, but in the last five years I got to know and like mozzarella...” — Neil

“The dough reminded me of home. My Mother would make pasta, pizza, bread, cake from scratch.” — Silvija

“My experience of cooking with other people has been one of stress, sometimes anger. This was great, felt listened to, could follow instructions.” — Neil

pizza dough ingredients:

500g bread flour.
7g yeast.
1 teaspoon sugar.
2 teaspoon salt.
300ml warm water.
50ml olive oil.

tomato sauce ingredients:

2 brown onions, diced.
1 stick celery, diced.
6 clove garlic, diced.
1 medium carrot, diced.
Olive oil for frying the diced vegetables.
1 tablespoon tomato paste.
3 400ml tins of chopped tomatoes.
2 bay leaves.
1 tablespoon dried oregano.
Salt & pepper.

some topping suggestions:

Corn.
Onion.
Mushroom.
Bell pepper.
Basil.
Oregano.
Chicken.
Mozzarella cheese.

pizza dough method:

1. Whisk the yeast in the water with the sugar and set aside until bubbles form.
2. Mix in the remaining ingredients and knead for 5 to 7 minutes.
3. Place in an oiled bowl, cover with a clean damp tea-towel or cling film and leave to rise for 2 hours.
4. Divide the dough into four evenly-sized balls and set aside for another hour.

tomato sauce method:

1. Fry the onion, celery, garlic and carrot until soft.
2. Add the bay leaves, oregano and tomato paste and fry for 2 minutes.
3. Add the tomatoes and cook for 30 minutes on medium or until reduced by $\frac{1}{3}$.
4. Season with salt & pepper to taste.

make and bake your pizza:

1. Roll-out a dough ball into a pizza shape.
2. Spread a generous layer of your tomato sauce over the pizza base.
3. Sprinkle a layer of shredded mozzarella.
4. Add the toppings of your choice.
5. Sprinkle with oregano and basil leaves.
6. Place your pizza in a preheated oven at 220–250°C for 10–12 minutes, or until the crust is golden and the cheese is bubbling.

PIZZA OUR WAY

pizza our way — custom toppings used by the group on our pizzas:

Cayenne pepper.
Peri-peri spices.
Marinated chicken.
Ketchup, black olives, mushroom,
mozzarella, sweetcorn, salami.

chef Ed's top tips & techniques for making your own pizza dough:

Pizza dough is made with 00 flour;
a fine, strong flour typically used
for pasta and pizza, or bread flour
can be used.

For 1 pizza, shape the dough into
a ball, fold it in on itself and place it
seam side down. The amount of dough
for 1 pizza is about the size of a large
potato/tennis ball.

The tomato base for the pizza is made
with a 'sofrito' — the softly fried onion,
celery, garlic and carrot — which is
a base for most sauces, soups and
stews in Italian cuisine.

In Italy the basil is never chopped,
the whole leaf is used.

chicken base:

Marinated chicken thighs: infused with
garlic, smoked paprika, lemon zest, thyme,
salt & pepper, then oven-roasted to
perfection. Shred or slice the roasted
chicken and add generously to your pizza
for a rich, savoury bite.

veggie medley:

Sweetcorn for a pop of sweetness.
Sliced onions for a mellow crunch.
Mushrooms for earthy depth.
Bell peppers for colour and crispness.
Black olives for a briny contrast.

cheese & herb:

Mozzarella cheese over the top
for creamy richness.
Dried oregano sprinkled for
classic Italian aroma.
Fresh basil leaves added after
baking for a fragrant finish.

sauce & spice:

Ketchup as a playful twist on the base
or drizzled on top.
Cayenne pepper and peri-peri spices
for those who love heat.
Salami slices for a smoky, meaty kick.



Jamila's

CHOCOLATE CHIP COOKIES



"Nightmare cookies, because you/we just want to keep eating them.
Let's make them again!" — **Mody & Jamila**

A happy accident

"We made cookies from scratch and we increased the batch amounts but miscalculated and didn't increase the sugar. Our first portion tasted like bread, and much of the mixture flew out of the mixer. We added milk, cocoa powder, more sugar and choc chips. Ultimately several people preferred this batch." — **Jamila, Silvija & Srithi**

Shared nostalgic memories of sweet treats

"I have memories of sponge cake/ black cake at Christmas time: with raisins, prunes, soaked in cherry brandy, rum or wine. Fruit would get ground in a machine, kids would get to lick the bowl, get a hint of alcohol, exciting." — **Elizabeth**

ingredients:

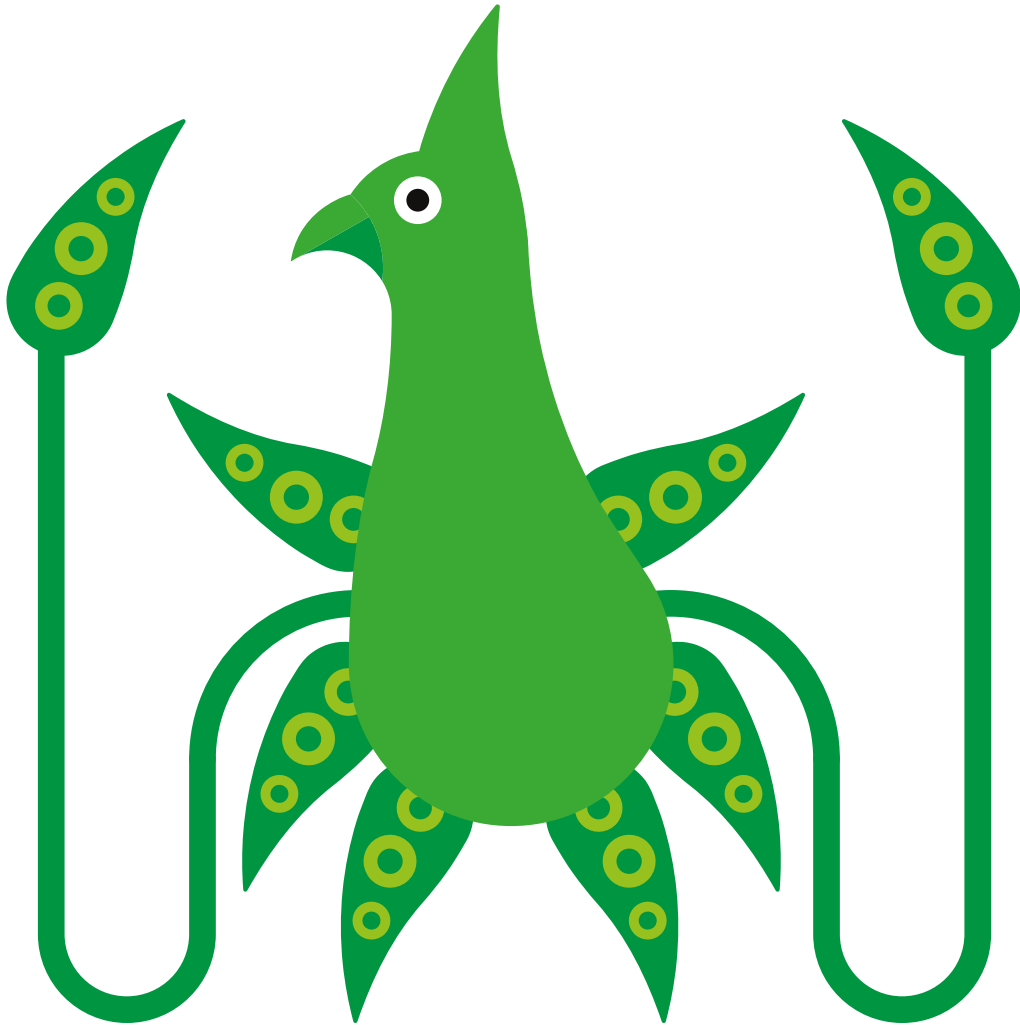
200g unsalted butter (softened).
75g caster sugar.
2 eggs.
4 teaspoons vanilla extract.
350g self-raising flour.
2 pinches salt.
200g chocolate chips.

method:

1. Preheat the oven to 160°C.
2. Cream the sugar and butter with an electric whisk or with the back of a wooden spoon.
3. Beat the eggs and vanilla and add to the mixture.
4. Fold in the flour and baking powder and add the chocolate chips.
5. Form into golf-ball sized pieces and bake on a tray for 12 minutes.

Silvija's

"SWEET ALIEN" CROATIAN SQUID SALAD



"I was to be the chef for the day which was quiet overwhelming, but I eased into the role. It was like 'what am I doing?' But it was fun. Squid is comfort food; you have it whenever you feel for it. Mixing the salad together brings out the flavour. The more you mix the better it tastes. You must mix it gently; they are like flowers, you can't be rough with it. Don't really salt it much as you want each veggie to taste like itself. You can also grill the seafood with garlic, coriander, asparagus, potato, olive oil and have with a side dish of cucumber yogurt with red pepper (spice) on it. Some people add mint, thyme or oregano/ parsley into a squid salad. Rosemary can be used, finely chopped. Octopus is a traditional dish in Croatia. It is stone baked. We have it during winter. My food from back home is all about 'less is more,' we just cook with the bare minimum (some salt), we do this with most of our food, I guess it's just culture. Back home children used to carry a knife and go by the sea and catch some mussels and eat them." — **Silvija**

ingredients:

1kg fresh squid
700g potatoes.
3 cloves of garlic.
1 large onion.
2 cucumbers.
Generous handful of pitted olives.
4 large tomatoes.
3 tablespoons oregano leaves.
3-4 tablespoons olive oil.
1-2 tablespoons wine vinegar/white.
White balsamic vinegar (or white wine vinegar).
Salt & pepper to taste.

You can also make this sweet alien salad with octopus or prawns.

method:

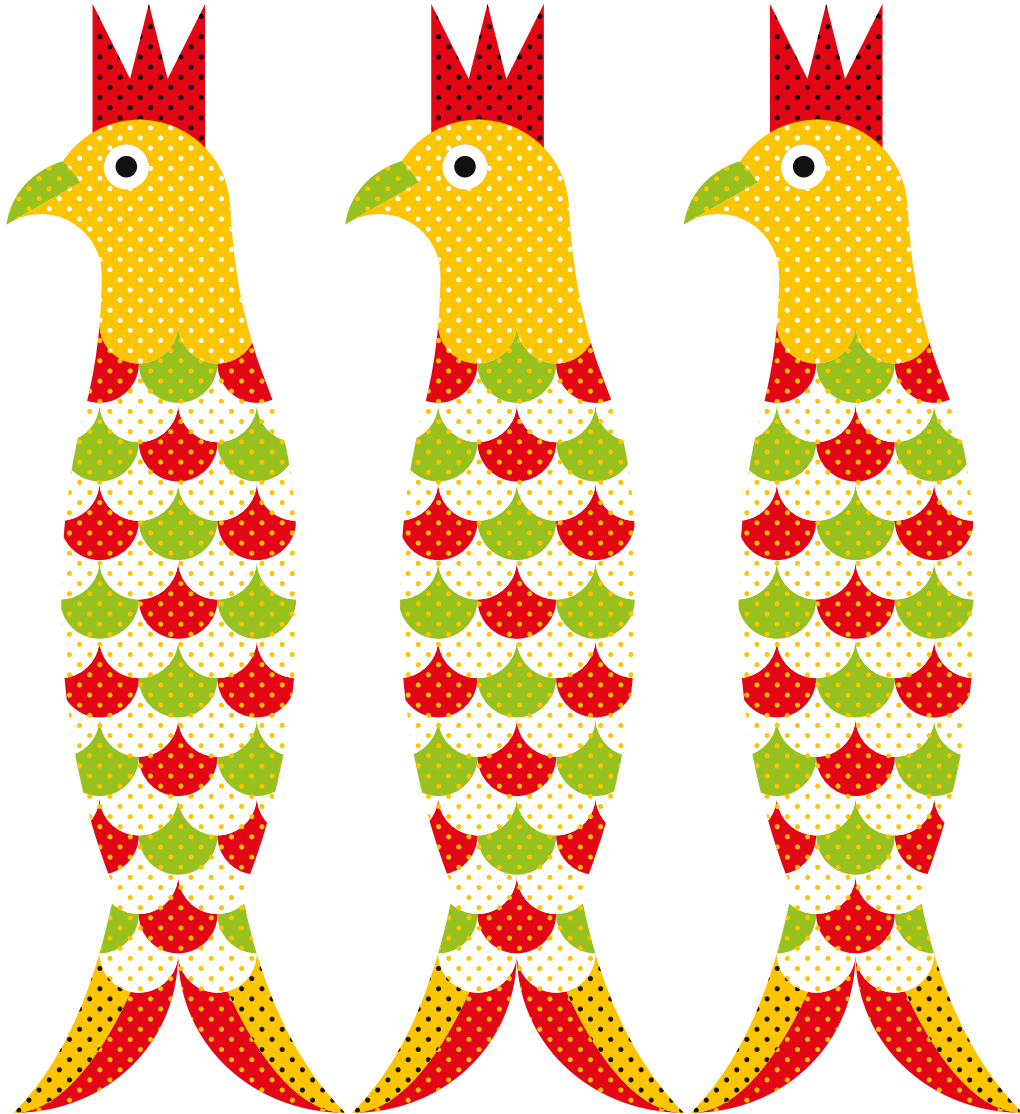
1. Use frozen squid, as it is tender. If you have a fresh squid, pop it in the freezer for 1-2 days and cook once it defrosts. Start defrosting the squid 1 day ahead.
2. Place the squid in a pot, cover with water and simmer with the lid on for about 1 hour. Add salt during the last 5-10 minutes. The meat must be fork-tender. Do not cook much longer because more cooking will not make the squid softer.

3. While the squid is cooking, wash the potatoes (don't peel them) and put them in a pot.
4. Add cold water and salt, cover and cook for about 40 minutes until tender.
5. Drain the potatoes and set them aside to cool slightly.
6. Peel and slice the potatoes while they're still warm.
7. Mince the garlic and chop the oregano leaves.
8. Peel the onion and cut into thin, elegant slices.
9. Cut the olives in half.
10. Drain the squid but reserve a small amount of the stock and set aside to cool.
11. Combine all the vegetables and herbs while the potato is still slightly warm. The heat will help it soak up the flavours.
12. Season with olive oil and white balsamic vinegar. Add salt & pepper.
13. Chop the squid into smaller pieces.
14. Add it to the rest of the salad. If everything seems a bit dry, add a few tablespoons of the squid stock.
15. Serve warm or cold.

Mody's

CRISPY FRIED FISH

"I learned to cook because I was living on my own. I had no one to cook for me. So, I had to do it myself." — **Mody**



ingredients:

1kg monkfish (or your favourite white flesh fish)
1½ tablespoons turmeric.
1 tablespoon fish seasoning.
1 tablespoon black pepper
Oil for frying.
1 onion, thinly sliced.
2 garlic cloves, finely chopped.
3 small chillies, finely chopped.

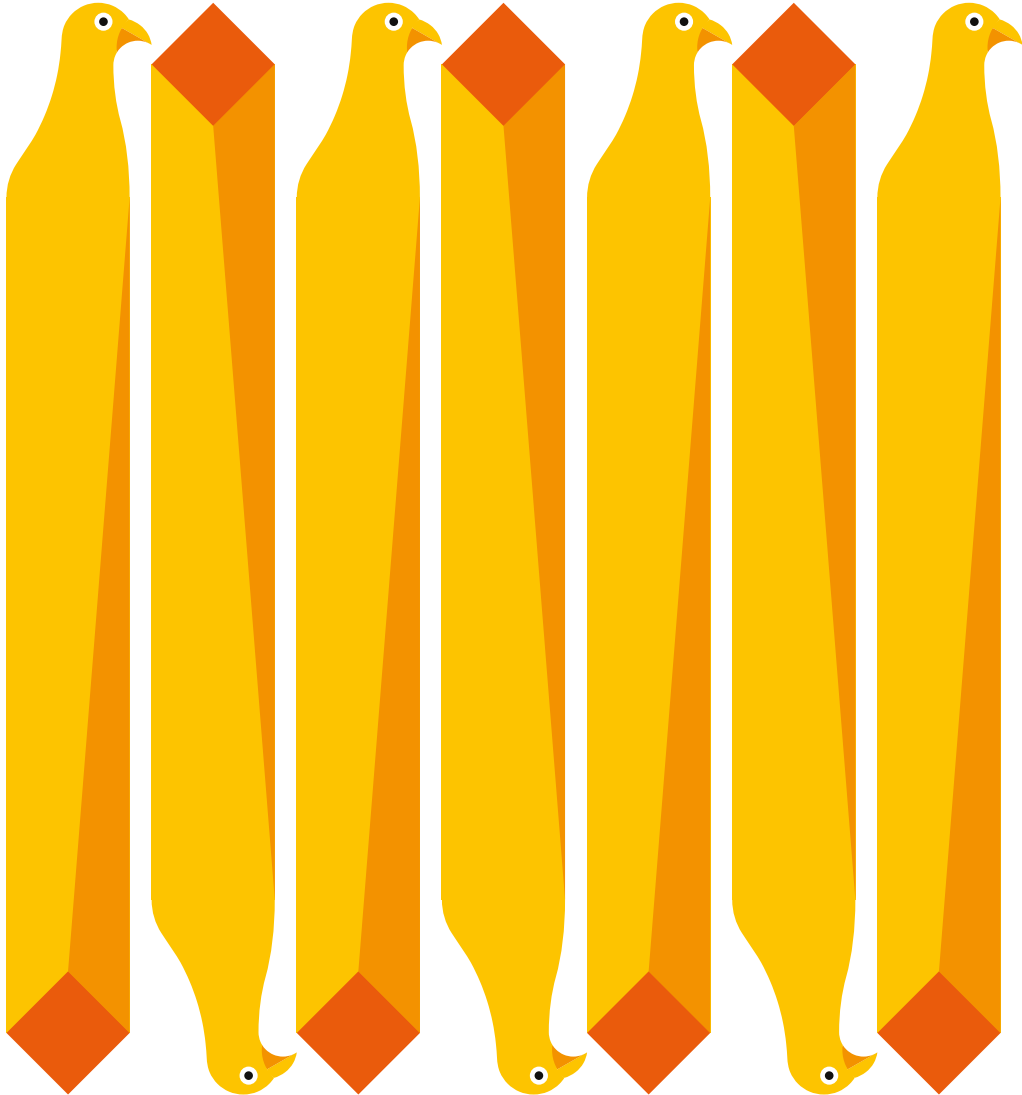
You can also use berbere spice to season the fish to give an earthy, slightly sweet flavour with a kick of heat.

method:

1. Sprinkle turmeric, fish seasoning and black pepper over the fish and leave for 1 hour to marinate.
2. Heat enough oil in a large skillet for deep frying. Add fish pieces and fry until golden on all sides and cooked through. Remove to a paper towel lined plate to absorb excess oil. Sprinkle with a little salt.
3. Add the onions and cook until golden and caramelised, about 10 minutes. Add garlic and chillies. Cook for 1 more minute.
4. Return fish to the pan. Add lime juice and toss to combine.
5. Serve with lime wedges (and an extra sprinkle of berbere spice if you like!)

Chef Ed's

HOMEMADE CHIPS



ingredients:

500g maris piper potatoes.
Sunflower oil.
Salt.

method:

1. Cut potatoes into thick 2cm wide chips.
2. Place in cold water and bring to boil.
3. Boil for 2-3 minutes.
4. Drain and leave to steam off in a colander.
5. Deep or air fry at 150°C until just soft. Remove and allow to cool.
6. Deep or air fry at 170°C until golden.
7. If deep frying, strain the chips of excess oil.
8. Season with salt to taste and serve!

Mama J's JERK CHICKEN



ingredients:

9 quartered chicken legs & thighs
1 brown onion
1 bundle of spring onions
1 bundle of fine leaf thyme
1 thumb-sized piece of ginger
2 tablespoons Dunn's River Jerk Seasoning Powder
4 tablespoons Dunn's River Jamaican Jerk Seasoning Mix
2 teaspoons Maggi Season-Up (chicken flavour)
1 tablespoon black pepper
1 tablespoon cayenne pepper
Juice of 1 lemon (for washing)

method:

1. Clean and prep the chicken
2. Wash the chicken thoroughly with lemon juice, and pat dry with paper towels.
3. Score each piece with shallow cuts (about ½ inch deep) to help the marinade penetrate.
4. In a food processor, blend the brown onion, spring onions, thyme and ginger until smooth.
5. Transfer the mixture to a large bowl. Add the Dunn's River Jerk Seasoning Powder and Jamaican Jerk Seasoning Mix, Maggi Season-Up, black pepper and cayenne pepper. Mix well to form a thick, aromatic marinade.
6. Place the chicken in a large bowl or resealable bag. Pour the marinade over the chicken and massage it in, making sure it gets into the scored slits.
7. Cover and refrigerate for at least 4 hours, preferably overnight, for maximum flavour.

"I'm very passionate about food! When you have a love for cooking, it comes out. I first cooked at age 10 — ackee and saltfish with dumplings — grandma let me cook it, did not come out well but family did have it. Grandma said: 'You can't say me no nyam from you!'" — Joan

option A, char-grilled jerk chicken:

1. Preheat a charcoal grill to medium-high for authentic smoky flavor. For gas grills, use indirect heat.
2. Place chicken skin-side up over indirect heat. Cover and grill for 1 hour, flipping every 15 minutes.
3. In the final 5–10 minutes, move chicken to direct heat to char and crisp the skin.
4. Ensure internal temperature reaches 74°C before serving.

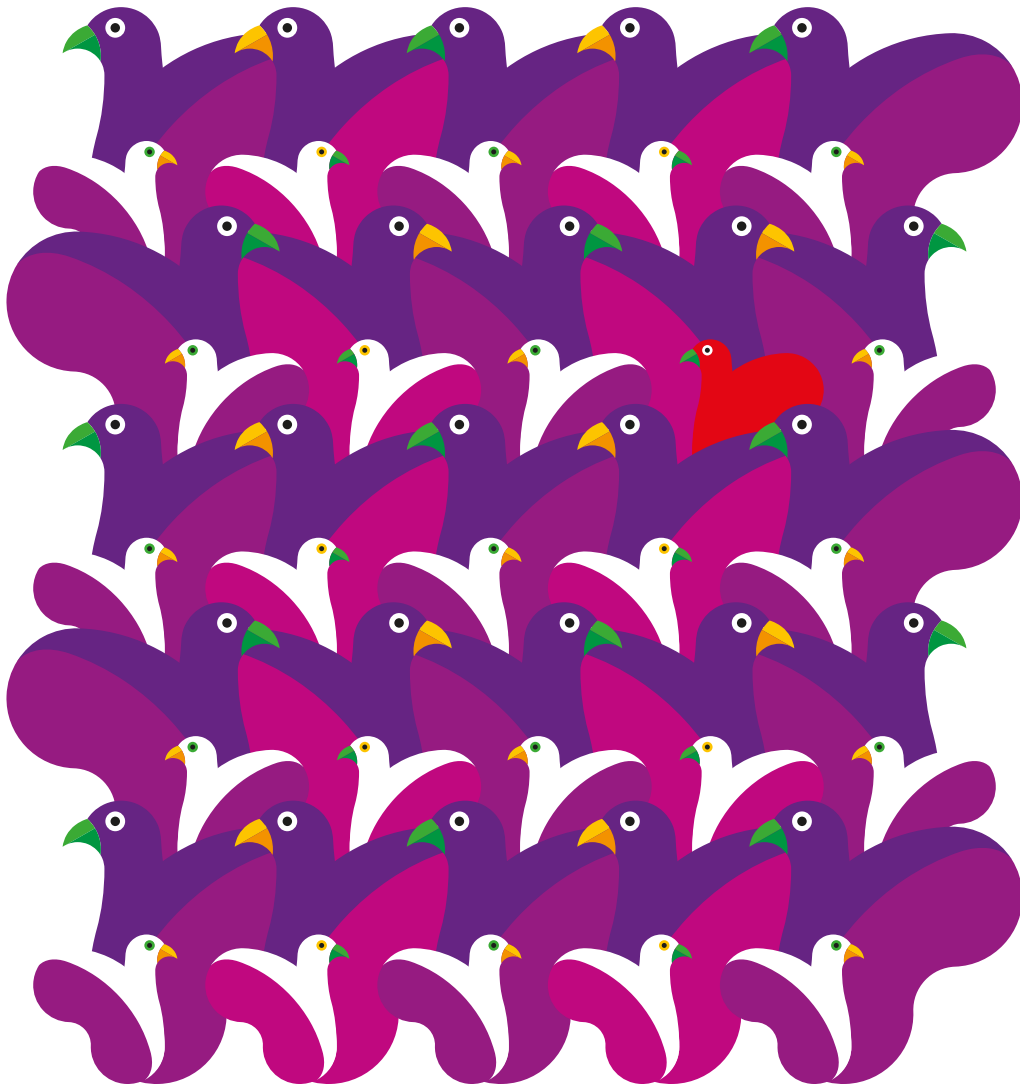
option B, oven-roasted jerk chicken:

1. Preheat oven to 200°C and position a rack in the middle.
2. Line a baking sheet with foil and place chicken skin-side up on top of it. Tent it loosely with foil.
3. Roast for 1 hour. Remove foil and continue roasting for 15–20 minutes until skin is browned and crispy.
4. Broil on low for 5 minutes to add a final char.

Mama J's

RICE & PEAS

"I learned from Joan's recipe that I have to wash the rice and that I can add coconut milk and a whole scotch bonnet to it for flavour." — Neil



ingredients:

- 2 tins red kidney beans (the 'peas').
- 1 tin coconut milk.
- 3 cups long grain rice.
- 1 whole scotch bonnet pepper.
- 1 scallion, chopped.
- 1 onion, chopped.
- 2 pimento berries or 1 teaspoon of ground pimento (allspice).
- 2 cloves garlic, finely chopped.
- 1 small piece ginger.
- 3 sprigs fine leaf thyme.
- 2 teaspoons salt (or salt to taste).

method:

1. Build the flavour base. In a large pot, combine the beans (with liquid), scallion, onion, thyme, scotch bonnet, pimento, ginger, garlic, salt and coconut milk. Add 2–3 cups of water.
2. Bring to a gentle simmer over a low heat for 10–15 minutes to infuse the flavours.
3. Wash the rice thoroughly to remove excess starch. Add it to the pot and stir gently. Taste the liquid and adjust seasoning if needed.
4. Cover the pot and bring to a boil. Immediately reduce the heat to low and let it steam until all the liquid is absorbed and the rice is tender, about 20–30 minutes. Avoid stirring during this stage.

By adding a whole scotch bonnet — not cut and without any visible holes — allows its flavour to seep-in gently without overpowering the dish with spicy heat.

Flavour tip: add a small spoonful of dark brown sugar for a subtle depth, just enough to enhance the taste without anyone guessing it's there.

Catarina's

LEMON REMIX CHEESECAKE & CRUMBLE SHOTS



"Cooking involves mindfulness." — Catarina

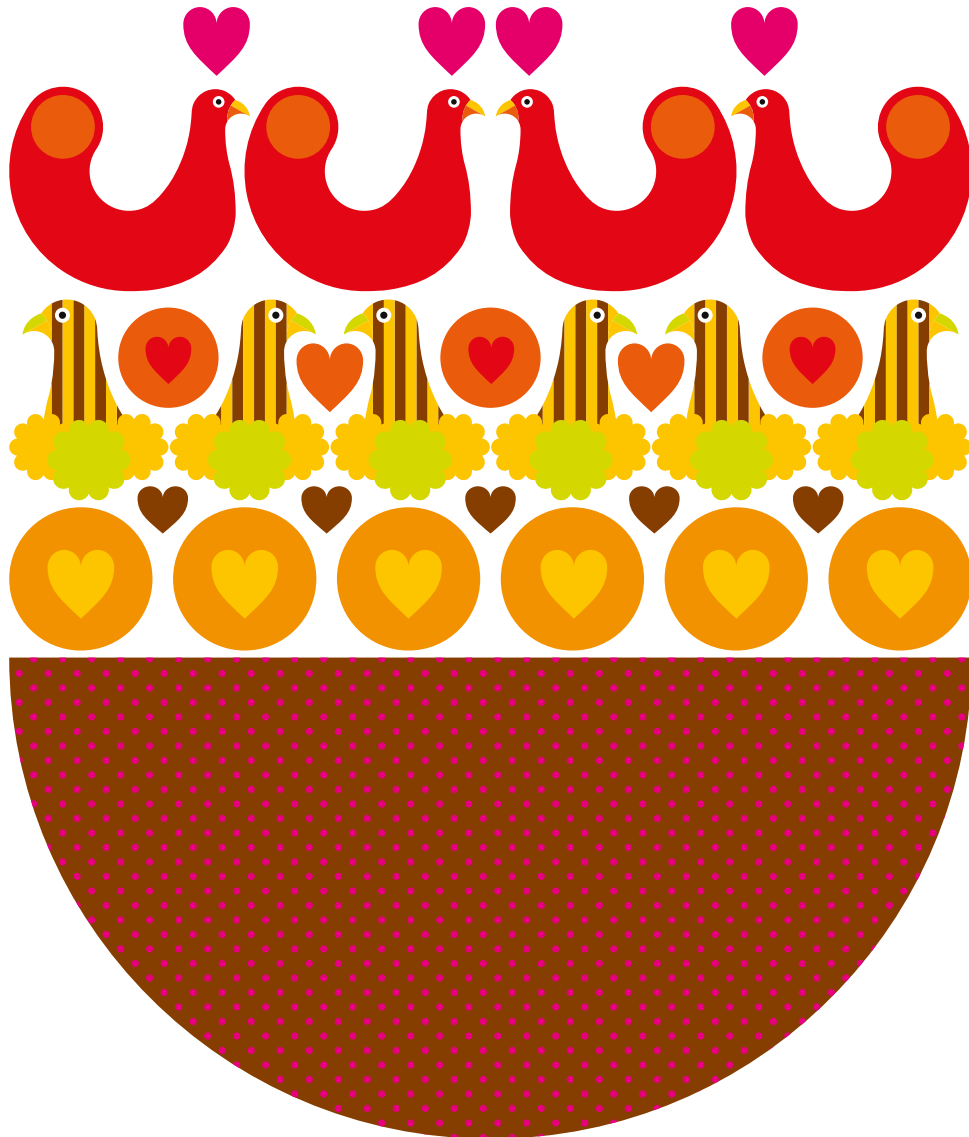
ingredients:

2 cups pecans.
1 cup ground almonds.
½ cup of melted butter.
2–3 tablespoons soft brown sugar.
500g mascarpone.
2 lemons, juice & zest.
1 tablespoon vanilla extract.
Maple syrup (add according to taste).

method:

1. Whizz the pecans, ground almonds, melted butter and brown sugar in a blender until smooth.
2. Press the mixture into a 20cm (8-inch) round springform tin, lined with parchment paper.
3. Bake at 170°C for 30 minutes, then let it cool completely.
4. Once the base is baked, set aside to cool.
5. Mix the mascarpone, lemon juice & zest, vanilla extract and maple syrup until smooth and evenly combined.
6. Spread the mascarpone mixture over the cooled nut base. Smooth the top and refrigerate for at least 2 hours, or until set.
7. Enjoy the cheesecake!

Mody's CHICKEN MAQLUBA



“Cooking is about sharing, coming from the heart. Does this happen to you? When you cook for your family, you feel full by the time you eat! I grew up with different nationalities around me, different foods and five languages in my head. One time, me and my brother tried to flip the maqluba — it fell on the floor. We ended up both laughing/crying over what happened. Somehow, we managed to eat what was left in the pot.” — Mody

ingredients:

1kg fresh chicken (medium or large bone-in pieces, with skin on).
4 cups short-grain rice (about 850g).
½ head cauliflower.
3 large potatoes (peeled and cut into thick slices).
1 carrot (cut into medium slices).
1 large onion, chopped.
8 large cloves garlic (cut into thin slices).
3–4 bay leaves.
Sunflower or vegetable oil (for frying).
4½ teaspoons salt.

You can make this maqluba with lamb instead of chicken.

For a vegetarian version, follow the same recipe just without the chicken.

Chef Ken also suggested another variation, using two fish slices with finely chopped thyme, garlic, ginger, green chillies, gluten-free soya sauce and salt. Leave the fish to marinate in this mix for 1–2 hours, then place as the first layer in the pot.

to marinate chicken:

1 tablespoon coriander powder.
½ teaspoon ground black pepper.
½ teaspoon turmeric powder.
2 tablespoons ginger & garlic paste.

maqluba spice mix:

1 teaspoon cinnamon powder.
½ teaspoon turmeric powder.
½ teaspoon coriander powder.
½ teaspoon cumin powder.
½ teaspoon ground allspice.
¼ teaspoon black pepper powder.
¼ teaspoon ground cloves.
¼ teaspoon green cardamom powder.



CHICKEN MAQLUBA

methods:

marinate the chicken:

1. Cut the chicken into medium-large pieces. Pat dry and add to a bowl.
2. Add the marinated ingredients and rub well into the pieces. Set aside for 1 hour.

wash and soak rice:

1. Rinse the rice thoroughly until the water runs clear, and then soak for up to 30 minutes (read the package instructions as different rice varieties require less or no soaking time). I find soaking ensures that the rice will be cooked nicer and not sticky. After soaking, keep the rice drained in a colander.

prepare the maqluba spice-mix:

1. Combine the spice mix spices in a bowl.

chop/slice vegetables:

1. Chop the onion. Slice the garlic, potato, cauliflower and carrot. The potato and cauliflower must be fairly thick slices/chunks. Keep one side of the cauliflower chunks flat, so that they are easier to fry.

sear the marinated chicken:

1. Heat $\frac{1}{4}$ cup oil in a flat, non-stick pan large enough to fit the chicken pieces. We don't want to cook them fully, just sear the skin and give it a golden brown colour on all sides. This takes 4-5 minutes per side, depending on the size of the pieces.
2. Remove the chicken to a plate. Strain the oil used for frying and add to a stockpot.

prepare the broth:

1. Heat the same oil used for frying the chicken in a stockpot. Add the chopped onion and sauté till softened nicely and just starting to change colour.

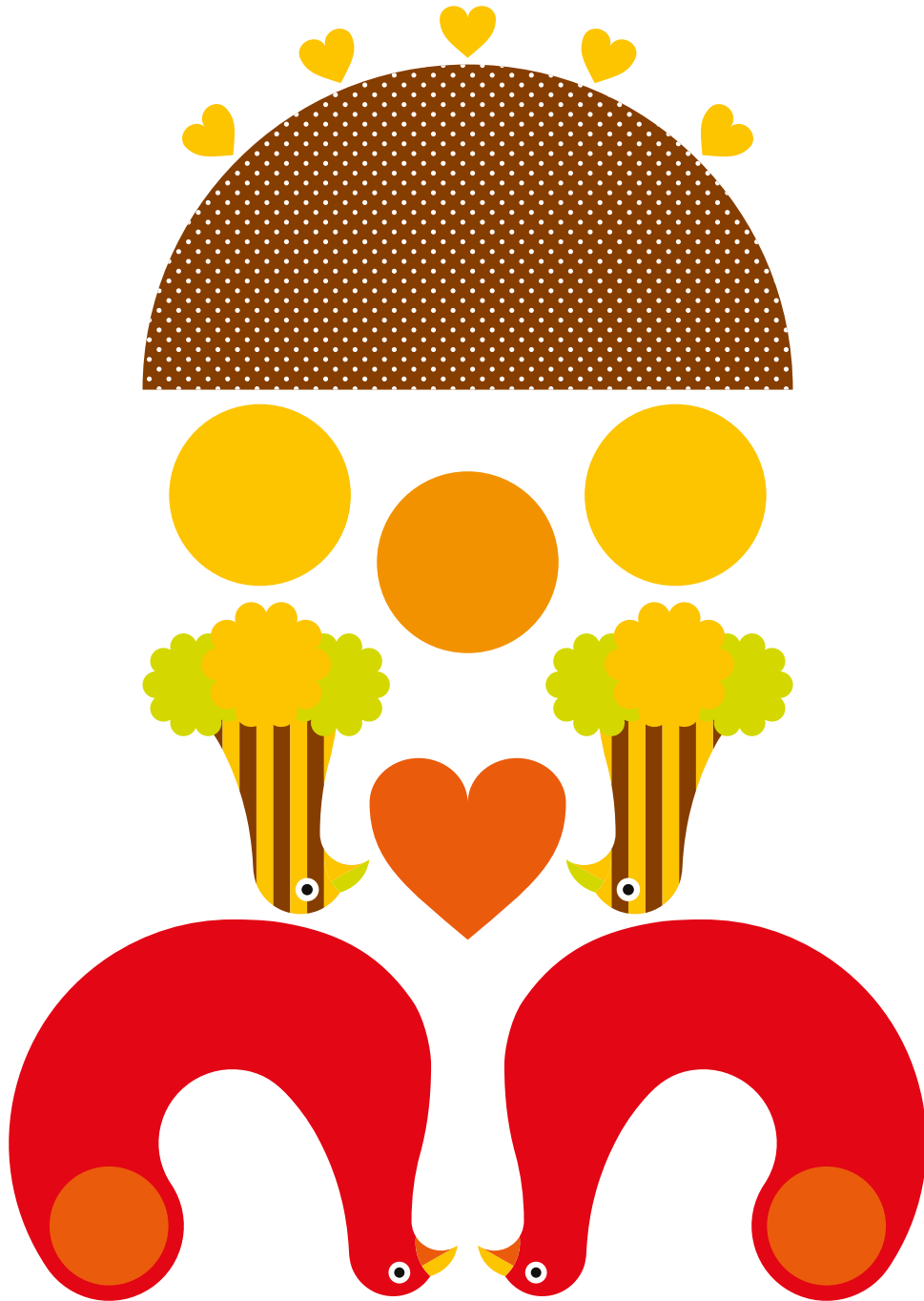
2. Return the fried chicken and toss with the onions to coat the chicken and absorb some flavour. Toss just a brief while. Add 1 tablespoon of salt and mix through (remember we have not added any salt to the chicken while marinating).
3. Add 8 cups hot water and the bay leaves and bring to a simmer. As the water begins to simmer, remove the scum that floats to the top of the broth (once the broth boils strongly, it will just boil 'into' the stock and can not be removed. If the scum is not removed it can cause an unpleasant layer of impurity over the cooked rice).
4. As soon as the water boils, add 1 tablespoon of the prepared spice mix. Stir, cover, and reduce heat to low. Bring to a light simmer, keeping it covered, and simmer for 20 minutes.
5. After simmering for 20 minutes, remove from the heat. Gently remove the chicken pieces. Lightly sprinkle a pinch of salt over the chicken pieces and set aside.
6. Strain the hot broth to remove the onions and set the broth aside.

frying the vegetables:

1. Heat a generous amount of oil in a pan. Fry the sliced garlic until light golden then quickly strain them out of the oil. Don't allow them to turn dark, or they will go bitter.
2. To the flavoured oil, add the cauliflower and fry each side until golden. Remove the fried cauliflower to kitchen paper towels, to absorb excess oil. Repeat this process with the potatoes. No need to fry the carrots.



CHICKEN MAQLUBA



assemble the maqluba:

Although usually 1 large pot is used to prepare the maqluba, I prefer to divide the ingredients equally into two smaller, similar-sized pots. This makes it easier to flip over later. Lightly grease the bottom of the pots, you may also like to line the bottoms with a round of parchment paper to prevent any ingredients from sticking. Place the ingredients into the two pots in the following order:

1. Add a layer of chicken. Adding the chicken on the bottom helps to get the skin crisp, and you get a sort of 'baked effect' that tastes so good.
2. Fill in the gaps with the carrot slices. Add a layer of fried cauliflower chunks and then a layer of potato slices.
3. Add the rice. Do not stir the layers. You have three layers now — chicken at the bottom, vegetables in the middle, and rice on top.
4. Sprinkle $1\frac{3}{4}$ teaspoons salt per pot over the rice, and $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon prepared spice mix per pot (again, no mixing please!). Divide and scatter the fried garlic slices over the top.
5. Slowly pour the strained broth over the rice, again dividing equally between both pots, and just enough to cover the rice by about a centimetre.

You can of course make your maqluba in one big pot if you prefer! It's the same method, just with everything for each layer going into the one pot. Step 2 of the cooking may take a little longer in one big pot than in the two smaller sized ones.

cook the maqluba on low heat:

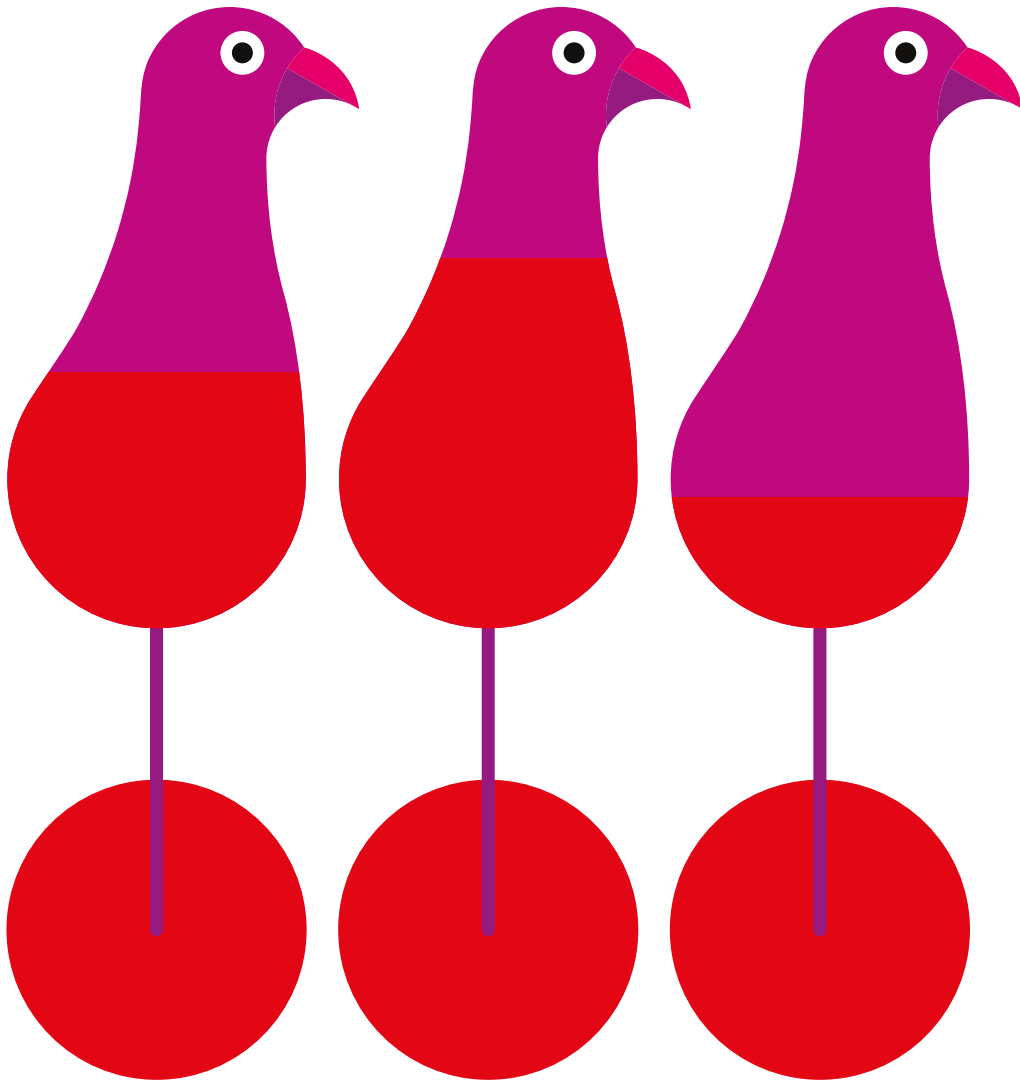
1. Place a small flat steel plate over the top to help keep the layers from moving around.
2. Cover the pots, and place them on the lowest heat. After around 10-15 minutes, the water should be absorbed. The water should never boil, or the layers will get mixed up.
3. After 10 minutes, I listen to the pot to make sure there is no crackling noise. In any case, do not cook too long, or you will burn the bottom layer.
4. Remove the steel plate from the top and check on the side of the rice with a long chopstick, to make sure there is no liquid left.
5. Now return the lid and just rest the cooked maqluba for a further 10 minutes. This will help the rice to plump up in the residual steam and also develop flavour.
6. Open and allow any excess steam to escape.

flip it upside down:

1. Place the serving platter over the open pot and grab hold of the handles and the sides of the platter together firmly. Flip it over. Wait at least 5 minutes before gently lifting the pot to reveal the lovely tower that is maqluba!
2. Garnishing is not necessary, although you might like some toasted pine nuts. Serve with yoghurt & cucumber salad. I like to add some garlic powder and cumin to my yoghurt salad.

Elizabeth's

SORREL (HIBISCUS) DRINK



While waiting for Mama J's jerk chicken to cook, we sat down with a cup of hibiscus tea which led to sharing of different recipes for sorrel, the Jamaican/Caribbean hibiscus flower made as a tea or a cold drink. The fresh flower would bloom at Christmas and sorrel is made as a special Christmas drink mixed with ginger, white rum (or Red Label wine, a Jamaican spiced wine) and clove, sweetened to taste, enjoyed hot or cold.

Elizabeth made a hibiscus-sorrel drink for the group using less sugar so it could be enjoyed by the whole group. This non-alcoholic drink can be drunk like sorrel wine.

ingredients:

1 50g pack Tropical Sun Sorrel (Hibiscus).
1 stick of cinnamon.
10 cloves (or 100mg ground cloves).
2 bay leaves.
500g brown sugar.
10 cups water.

method:

1. Bring 10 cups water to a boil. Add the cinnamon, cloves and bay leaves.
2. Boil for 1 minute, stirring continuously, then cover and simmer on a low heat for 30 minutes.
3. Add the dried sorrel and sugar. Simmer for another 30 minutes.
4. Remove from the heat and set aside. Leave it to steep for about 4 hours, or overnight, covered.
5. Using a sieve, strain the liquid into a large bowl, squeeze out the sorrel, then discard the spent flowers and spices.
6. Give it a taste. If it's too potent, add water, if it's too tart add more sugar.
7. Pour into glass jars or bottles and store in a cool place until ready to use.

RECIPES OF LIFE FLAVOUR



TOWN

