

Traditional Recipes from the Northern Region of Ghana

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In collaboration with Williams Opong, Fauzia Yarim Laar, Dawud Afsat,
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The World Vegetable Center

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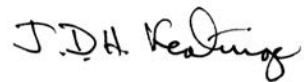
Foreword

Malnutrition remains a global problem, with women and children the worst affected, particularly in sub-Saharan Africa. During the Second International Conference on Nutrition (ICN2) in 2014, dietary diversity was among the recommended approaches to address all forms of malnutrition. Various indices of dietary diversity, including Women's Dietary Diversity Scores, are good proxies of household dietary diversity and household nutrient adequacy.

Traditional knowledge on the use of diverse plant species, including how to prepare these plants for consumption, forms a critical base for household dietary diversity. Vegetables are a cheap and sustainable source of much-needed micronutrients for human health, and are an integral part of agricultural biodiversity. As increasing numbers of people migrate to Africa's cities, urban poverty is on the rise and levels of wasting and stunting have soared, especially among children under five. Traditional knowledge on how to grow and prepare nutritious vegetables such as amaranth is often lost when people move from rural to urban areas. Preparation methods and different combinations of food can improve consumption and uptake of micronutrients.

The recipes in this book were collected and documented under the UrbanFoodPlus project financially supported by the Federal Ministry of Education and Research (BMBF). UrbanFoodPlus is an African-German partnership seeking to enhance resource use efficiency of urban and periurban agriculture and improve food security in West African cities. AVRDC – The World Vegetable Center is a partner in the UrbanFoodPlus project. This book was prepared in collaboration with the Department of Family and Consumer Sciences of the University for Development Studies based in Tamale, Ghana.

This work was inspired by two studies carried out in and around Tamale under UrbanFoodPlus: A food flow study focused on the movement and supply of food in and out of Tamale, and a food and nutrition study which explored the dynamics of household food and nutrition insecurity and the implication of agriculture along the urban - rural continuum.



J.D.H. Keatinge
Director General
AVRDC – The World Vegetable Center

Contents

Introduction	6
Acknowledgements	7
About the recipes	8
ONE-POT DISHES	9
Tubaani (steamed cowpea pudding)	10
Dawadawa jollof with Guinea fowl	14
Spaghetti (pasta) jollof	15
Yam pottage	16
ACCOMPANIMENTS	17
TZ	18
Rice balls	19
Banku	20
Fried yam	21
Waakye (rice and beans)	22
Boiled pigeon pea	23
MAIN DISHES (SOUPS AND STEWS)	24
Fish groundnut soup	25
Fish bra leaves soup	26
Fish jute mallow leaves soup	28
Fish okra (dry) soup	29
Fish okra (fresh) soup	30
Fish baobab (dry) leaves soup	31
Fish okra stew	32
Amaranth leaves stew	33
Shito	34
DRINKS	35
Tamarind drink	36
Sobolo drink (Roselle calyx drink)	37
SNACK	38
Roasted groundnut	39
Koose (fried cowpea bean cake)	40
Porridge	41
Corn dough flour porridge	41
Spiced corn dough porridge	41
Spiced sorghum dough porridge	41
Spiced millet flour porridge	41

Introduction

The Northern Region is the largest region in Ghana with Tamale as the regional administrative and economic centre. The northern part of Ghana is situated in the Guinea Savannah agro-ecological zone of West Africa. Crop production in this zone is highly dependent on seasonal climatic patterns. Whereas staple food crop production flourishes during the rainy season, dry season cultivation is limited due to the lack of water sources for irrigation.

Most people, particularly in the rural areas, are subsistence farmers and source a large share of food from their own rain-fed production. They grow cereals such as maize, millet and sorghum, legumes (groundnut, bean, cowpea, pigeon pea, lately soya bean) and a variety of vegetables (hot pepper, tomato, onion, garden egg and dark green leafy vegetables) which are used in the preparation of soup and stews.

Livestock keeping is common and many urban and rural households rear cows, goats, sheep and poultry (chicken, guinea fowl, ducks, and turkeys). However, these do not form part of the daily meal but are mainly eaten on festive and special social or religious occasions. Consequently, protein consumption is usually from plant sources, especially among the rural or poor households that cannot afford animal protein. Fresh fish from freshwater sources, or dried fish such as smoked anchovies from the southern part of the country pounded as fish powder, also provide animal protein in household meals.

As part of our PhD research, we have been studying rural-urban food flows, household food and nutrition insecurity, and the role played by urban and periurban agriculture in feeding urban dwellers in Tamale. This incited our curiosity to find out to what extent certain agricultural goods actually contribute to food security in terms of calorie, vitamin and nutrient intake. Therefore, we needed to know what people were eating in their homes as well as outside, and how homemade food is being prepared.

To do this, eating patterns of twelve randomly selected households in urban, periurban and rural areas of Tamale were recorded. These food diaries consisted of the meals eaten by the individual households (either cooked at home or bought). The households were visited for a few days during the peak season of 2014 as well as the lean season of 2015. All foodstuff and ingredients were weighed and the food preparation processes recorded so as to depict the way such food is prepared in the region. To confirm the food preparation processes, the meals were cooked by members of the Department of Family and Consumer Sciences, University for Development Studies, Tamale, Ghana.



The Northern Region and its capital Tamale



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We would like to thank the individuals and institutions who in one way or another contributed to the collection and compilation of the recipes in this book. This work was done under the UrbanFoodPlus project funded by the BMBF (<http://www.urbanfoodplus.org>). Our gratitude goes to Williams Oppong, Fauzia Yarim Laar, Dawud Afsat, Oduro Koranteng Shadrack and Jonathan Osei Kwadwo for contributing to data collection and preparing the meals.

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About the recipes

The meals in this recipe book are designed to serve four persons. As much as possible, references to time are avoided as different sources of heat and hence temperatures might be used. Measurements are given in grams and millilitres where possible. Tea and table-spoon measurements used were levelled, not heaped. One teaspoon is on average 6 ml (liquid), 5 g (dry) and 1 tablespoon is on average 15 ml (liquid), 15 g (dry).

The book covers the meals that were recorded in the food diaries, which included:

ONE-POT DISHES - tubaani (steamed cowpea pudding), dawadawa jollof and macaroni (spaghetti or pasta) jollof and yam pottage

ACCOMPANIMENTS - TZ, rice balls, banku, fried yam, waakye and pigeon pea

MAIN DISHES (SOUPS AND STEWS) - fish groundnut soup, fish bra leaves soup, fish jute mallow leaves soup, fish okra (dry) soup, fish okra (fresh) soup, fish baobab (dry) leaves soup, fish okra stew, amaranth leaves stew and shito

DRINKS - puha and sobolo (roselle calyx drink)

SNACKS - roasted groundnut, koose (fried cowpea bean cake), kulikuli (fried groundnut residue rings)

List of vegetables/meals and their English or scientific names

Aleefu	<i>Amaranthus cruentus</i>
Ayoyo	<i>Corchorus olitorius</i>
Bra	<i>Hibiscus cannabinus</i>
Cloves	Exotic <i>Xylopia aethopica</i>
Dawadawa	African locust bean (<i>Parkia biglobosa</i>)
Groundnut	<i>Arachis hypogaea</i>
Hwentia	African <i>Xylopia aethopica</i>
Koose	Fried cowpea (bean) cake
Kulikuli	Fried groundnut residue rings
Kuuka	<i>Adansonia digitata</i>
Okra	<i>Abelmoschus esculentus</i>
Puha	<i>Tamarindus indica</i>
Sobolo	Roselle calyx drink
Tomatoes	<i>Solanum lycopersicum</i>
Tubaani	Steamed cowpea (<i>Vigna unguiculata</i>) pudding
TZ	Tuo Zaafi
Waakye	Rice and Beans (boiled)





Tubaani in a saucepan with leaves forming a base, and to cover the water

ONE-POT DISHES

Tubaani (steamed cowpea pudding)



Ingredients

- 800 g cowpea flour
- 6500 ml water

Preparation

- Mix water with cowpea flour and beat in circular motion until mixture is fluffy
- Wash leaves (people usually use *Thaumatococcus daniellii* leaf or banana leaf or corn husk) and wrap a small portion of the mixture in each
- Boil water on a separate fire

Cooking

- Put (enough) water on fire and cover
- Place some of the (empty) leaves in the sauce pan to form a base and then again on top to cover the water
- Put the wrapped mixture on the leaves in the boiling water, cover and steam for about 2 hours
- Occasionally add hot/boiling water, pouring around the sides of the saucepan to prevent burning
- Continue to steam until cooked
- Take off fire, unwrap and slice
- Serve hot with tomato sauce or spiced groundnut powder and vegetable oil (200 ml oil fried with 50 g onion and half a teaspoon powdered hot pepper)



Tomato sauce for Tubaani

Ingredients

- 280 ml oil
- 140 g onions
- 200 g tomatoes
- 50 g tomato paste
- 20 g hot pepper
- 50 g powdered fish
- 10 g bouillon tablet
- 20 g ginger
- 500 ml water
- Salt to taste

Preparation

- Chop onion
- Grind tomatoes, hot pepper and ginger
- Pound dry fish

Cooking

- Heat oil
- Add chopped onions and allow to fry
- Add ground vegetables and tomato paste
- Add salt to taste, stir and allow to simmer
- Crush in bouillon tablet and add fish powder
- Cover and allow to simmer until cooked
- Serve with Tubaani



Spaghetti (pasta) jollof

Ingredients

- 100 ml oil
- 350 g spaghetti (pasta)
- 200 g tomatoes
- 25 g dawadawa
- 150 g onions
- 50 g powdered fish (amani)
- 15 g hot pepper
- 10 g bouillon tablet
- 1000 ml water
- Salt to taste

Preparation

- Grind vegetables together
- Pound or crush dawadawa
- Break spaghetti into desirable pieces
- Chop onion
- Pound dry fish

Cooking

- Heat oil
- Add chopped onions, tomatoes and pounded dawadawa
- Allow to cook and add enough water to boil
- Add broken spaghetti
- Stir to prevent sticking together
- Cover and allow to cook
- Stir occasionally with wooden spoon until soft and all liquid is soaked up
- Serve hot





Dawadawa jollof with Guinea fowl

Jollof

Ingredients

- 600 g local rice
- 50 g dawadawa
- 50 g fish powder (optional)
- 120 g fresh onion
- 320 g fresh tomato
- 50 g tomato paste
- 20 g fresh hot pepper
- 20 g ground ginger
- 500 ml vegetable oil
- 1500 ml water

Preparation

- Slice onion
- Grind tomatoes, hot pepper and ginger
- Remove stones and foreign materials from rice and wash
- Pound or crush dawadawa

Cooking

- Put oil on fire and allow to heat
- Add onion to hot oil and allow to fry until cooked/slightly brown
- Add ground vegetables (tomato, ginger, hot pepper and onion)
- Add tomato paste and pounded or crushed dawadawa and stir
- Allow to simmer until cooked
- Add water and salt to taste
- Allow to boil
- Add rice, stir and allow to boil until cooked
- Serve hot with fried guinea fowl

Remarks

Dawadawa, a condiment, serves as a meat or protein source when there is no animal source of meat. Traditionally, shea butter is used instead of vegetable (cooking) oil.



Spaghetti (pasta) jollof



Guinea Fowl

Ingredients

- 380 g guinea fowl meat
- 500 ml vegetable oil
- 20 g ground ginger
- 10 g bouillon tablet
- 20 g sliced onion
- Salt to taste

Preparation

- Cut guinea fowl into pieces
- Grind ginger and onion
- Season meat with ground vegetables and bouillon tablet and allow to stand for 20 minutes

Cooking

- Boil seasoned meat until tender
- Put oil on fire and allow to heat
- Deodorize the oil by frying onion in it
- Fry guinea fowl pieces in hot oil in portions
- Turn occasionally to avoid burning
- When cooked, remove meat from oil and place in a colander to drain

Yam pottage

Ingredients

- 730 g yam
- 120 g fresh onion
- 160 g fresh tomatoes
- 200 ml palm oil
- 50 g fish powder (amani)
- 17 g hot pepper
- 10 g bouillon tablet
- 30 g tomato paste
- 1050 ml water
- Salt to taste



Preparation

- Wash and peel yam and cut into cubes
- Grind tomato, onion and hot pepper
- Pound dry fish

Cooking

- Put yam cubes into saucepan and add water
- Put on fire to boil
- Add salt, ground vegetables, tomato paste and fish powder
- Allow to cook until yam is soft
- Use spoon to mash yam against sauce pan for thickening consistency
- Add palm oil
- Allow to cook, add chopped onion and allow to simmer
- Serve when cooked

Remarks

To enhance the taste and nutritional content, non-slimy leafy vegetables can be added.





Some common cooking utensils used in food preparation

ACCOMPANIMENTS

TZ (Tuo Zaafi)

Ingredients for whole meal

500 g corn flour (whole meal)
150 g cassava flour
4250 ml water

Ingredients for dehusked meal

450 g corn flour (dehusked)
300 g cassava flour
3500 ml water



Preparation

Mix 1/3 corn flour with enough water
Mix remaining corn flour with cassava flour

Cooking

- Put water on fire to boil
- Add the mixture of corn flour with enough water and stir
- Cover and allow to boil and stir occasionally to prepare porridge
- Add more water if too thick
- Fetch 1/3 of porridge and keep aside
- Add corn/cassava flour mixture in bits by sprinkling to porridge on fire
- Stir vigorously to avoid lump formation
- If too thick add the set-aside porridge, a little at a time
- Stir (work) against pot to break lumps until cooked

Serve with bra, baobab, ayoyo leaves, okra or groundnut soup



Rice balls



Ingredients

- 800 g rice
- 3000 ml water

Preparation

- Pick foreign materials from rice and wash

Cooking

- Put water to boil
- Add rice, stir and cover
- Cook rice, adding more water in small amounts until rice is very soft
- Stir against pot to break rice grains
- Cover and allow to cook well
- Stir and mould into balls
- Serve hot with soup

Serve with groundnut soup

Banku



Ingredients

- 1000 g cassava dough
- 1300 g corn dough
- 2 tablespoons of salt
- 4000 ml water

Preparation

- Mash corn and cassava dough together with water
- Add salt to taste

Cooking

- Put mixture on fire and stir gently until mixture thickens
- Stir very well to break lumps into a smooth paste
- Add water (if too hard), cover and allow to boil for a few minutes
- Continue stirring until the food is cooked and the desired texture is acquired
- Mould into balls and serve

Serve with groundnut soup, okra soup, okra stew, aleefu stew, or bra soup



Fried yam



Ingredients

- 850 g sliced yam
- 2 teaspoons of salt
- 1500 ml water

Preparation

- Wash, peel and cut yam into eatable pieces
- Wash peeled yam (again)
- Add washed yam pieces to salt water (2 tablespoon of salt in 1500 ml of water) and allow to stand for three minutes

Cooking

- Heat oil
- Deep fry yam in bits
- Turn occasionally to cook evenly and to avoid burning
- Fry yam until crispy and cooked
- Serve hot with spiced groundnut powder, a little frying oil and/ or hot pepper sauce (15 g fresh hot pepper, 75 g onion, 65 g tomato ground together with salt to taste)

Waakye (rice and beans)

Ingredients

- 1000 g rice (unpolished or polished)
- 500 g cowpeas (black-eye)
- 50 g sorghum leaf stalk
- 5 g saltpetre (potash) – optional
- 4000 ml water
- Salt to taste

Preparation

- Pick foreign materials from the cowpea and wash
- Pick foreign materials from rice and wash to remove stones and dirt (if unpolished)
- Wash sorghum leaf stalk

Cooking

- Put water to boil
- Add sorghum leaf stalk and saltpetre
- Add cowpea to mixture
- Allow to boil until cowpeas are half cooked, add rice and stir to mix
- Add salt to taste and stir
- Allow mixture to boil until cooked
- Serve hot

Remarks:

Sorghum leaf stalk is added to extract its reddish brown colour, which makes the food look bright and also tasty.

Sauce for waakye

Ingredients

- 100 ml vegetable oil
- 120 g onion
- 230 g tomatoes
- 15 g hot pepper
- 200 g water
- Salt to taste
- 20 g fish powder
- 30 g tomato paste
- 13 g ginger
- 10 g bouillon cube



Preparation

- Slice onion
- Wash and grind tomatoes, hot pepper and ginger
- Pound dry fish

Cooking

- Heat oil and add sliced onions to fry
- Add ground vegetables and allow to boil
- Add tomato paste, stir and allow to simmer
- Add bouillon tablet, fish powder and salt
- Stir to mix evenly
- Cover and allow to simmer over low heat to cook further
- Add chopped onions and allow to cook for 2 minutes and take off fire

Boiled pigeon pea

Scientific name: *Cajanus cajan*

Local name(s): Adua

Ingredients

- 430 g pigeon peas
- Salt (to taste)
- Hot pepper (to taste)
- Onion (optional)
- Ground ginger (optional)
- Saltpetre (optional)
- 16500 ml water
- 200 g gari (optional)

Preparation

- Pick foreign materials from the pigeon peas and wash
- Soak pigeon peas in water overnight to soften and cook faster (optional)

Cooking

- Put water on fire and add pigeon peas to boil
- Continue to boil, adding water until tender and cooked
- Add saltpetre to aid softening and reduce cooking time (optional)
- Allow it to boil until pigeon peas are cooked, add salt (1 teaspoon)
- Serve boiled pigeon peas with fried oil (100 ml palm oil fried with 30 g sliced onion) and gari

Remarks

Amount of cooking water and time will be reduced if a pressure cooker is used.



Preparation of groundnut soup at home

MAIN DISHES (SOUPS AND STEWS)



Groundnut

Scientific names: *Arachis hypogaea*

Common names:

Local names: Sima (Northern Region), sikaa (Upper East), siimie, jenii (Upper West)

Fish groundnut soup

Ingredients

- 300 g groundnut paste
- 100 g onion
- 10 g hot pepper
- 130 g tomato
- 100 g smoked fish
- 30 g fish powder
- 30 g ginger
- 10 g bouillon tablet
- 3000 ml water
- Salt to taste



Preparation

- Mix groundnut paste with water and mash
- Grind tomatoes, hot pepper, ginger and onion
- Wash smoked fish, remove waste and bones
- Break fish into eatable/edible pieces
- Pound dry fish

Cooking

- Put groundnut paste mixture on fire and simmer until oil appears while stirring occasionally
- Add enough water of about 2000 ml and allow to boil for 10-15 minutes
- Add ground vegetables and allow to boil
- Add both pounded, smoked fish and crushed bouillon tablet into soup
- Add salt to taste
- Allow to boil until soup is cooked

Serve with tuo zaafi, banku, kenkey, eba, fufu (pounded yam, cocoyam, cassava or plantain)

Kenaf

Scientific names: *Hibiscus cannabinus*

Local names: Bra, bito (Upper East), bri, bre (Upper West)

Fish bra leaves soup

Ingredients

- 200 g bra leaves
- 300 g groundnut paste
- 130 g raw groundnuts
- 200 g tomato
- 80 g dry okra
- 50 g fish powder
- 60 g dawadawa
- 15 g hot pepper
- 180 g onion
- 10 g bouillon tablet
- Salt (to wash bra leaves and for soup to taste)
- 3500 ml water

Preparation

- Remove bad fish, fish heads and foreign material or dirt from the lot
- Pound the fish
- Scrape ginger, rinse in clean water and grind
- Sort raw groundnut
- Sort bra leaves, clean and wash with 30 g of salt water mixture and cut into desirable pieces
- Pound dawadawa
- Grind hot pepper with tomatoes
- Pound okra (rough texture)
- Slice onion

Cooking

- *Method 1:* Mix groundnut paste with enough water to make a mixture of light consistency, simmer until oil comes out, stirring occasionally





- *Method 2:* Put water on fire to boil, add groundnut paste and stir to mix; boil until oil comes out
- Add ground tomatoes and hot pepper
- Add pounded dawadawa and fish
- Add crushed bouillon tablet and allow to boil
- Add pounded raw groundnut and okra
- Add 1 tablespoon of ground ginger (optional)
- Add salt to taste and allow to boil until well cooked
- Add cut kenaf leaves, stir and allow to boil for a few minutes
- Bring off fire and serve

Serve with tuo zaafi, banku or rice balls.

Remarks

Instead of bra, one can use aleefu or any local dark green leafy vegetable (not slimy). Dawadawa is a local condiment made from fermented decorticated African locust bean (Parkia biglobosa) seeds. It is widely used in rural northern Ghana in stew and soup preparations to improve the taste and aroma of the food. It is nutritious; unfortunately, it is being neglected by the urban elite and gradually by some people in the rural areas because of its pungent smell.

Jute Mallow

Scientific names: *Corchorus olitorius L.*, *C. tridens L.*, *C. trilobularis L.*

Common names: Jute mallow

Local names: Ayoyo, Fotsolo, Fonsolo (Upper West)

Fish jute mallow leaves soup (Fish Ayoyo Soup)

Ingredients

- 300 g jute mallow leaves
- 50 g dawadawa
- 150 g fresh tomato
- 15 g fresh hot pepper
- 100 g onion
- 50 g fish powder
- 10 g bouillon tablet
- Saltpetre
- 1000 ml water
- Salt to taste



Preparation

- Wash jute mallow with 30 g salt added to water (brine)
- Chop/pound jute mallow
- Grind hot pepper (dry or fresh) and tomatoes
- Chop onion into pieces
- Pound dawadawa
- Pound dry fish

Cooking

- Put water on fire to boil
- Add pounded dawadawa and allow to boil
- Add ground tomatoes and hot pepper
- Add powdered hot pepper and chopped onion and allow to boil
- In a separate pot, steam jute mallow with little water
- Add saltpetre to make it slimy and steam for about 5-10 minutes
- Add steamed jute mallow to the mixture
- Add salt to taste
- Add water (if too thick) and allow mixture to boil
- Serve when cooked

Serve with tuo zaafi, banku, kenkey or eba

Remarks

Meat and/or any suitable protein source can be used. Palm or any other vegetable oil can also be added.



Okra

Scientific names: *Abelmoschus callei*, *A. esculentus*

Common names: Okra, Lady's fingers

Local names: Mana (Northern Region), nkruma (Twi), maana (Upper East), saalu, maani (Upper West)

Fish okra (dry) soup

Ingredients

- 80 g dry okra
- 50 g dawadawa
- 60 g fresh tomato
- 120 g fresh onion
- 15 g fresh hot pepper
- 1 bouillon tablet
- 50 g powdered fish
- Dry onion leaves (gabo)
- 1500 ml of water
- Salt to taste



Preparation

- Boil water
- Slice onions
- Pound dry onion leaves (gabo)
- Pound fish
- Grind tomatoes and hot pepper
- Pound dry okra

Cooking

- Put water on fire to boil
- Add pounded dawadawa
- Add fish powder and bouillon tablet and allow to boil
- Add sliced onions and ground vegetables
- Add water and allow to boil
- Add pounded dry okra in bits (sprinkling) while stirring to avoid lump formation
- Add pounded dry onion leaves (gabo) - optional
- Allow to boil for a few minutes and take off fire

Remarks

Gabo (dry onion leaves) is a local flavouring added to the food to improve aroma and taste.

Fish okra (fresh) soup

Ingredients

- 120 g okra
- 100 g onion
- 15 g fresh hot pepper
- 10 g of bouillon tablet
- 30 g powdered fish
- 50 g smoked fish
- 100 ml palm oil
- 5 g saltpetre
- 500 ml water
- Salt to taste



Preparation

- Wash and cut okra into pieces
- Pound okra with saltpetre in a mortar or beat in a bowl with a kitchen spoon until slimy
- Wash fish, remove bones, and waste and break into pieces
- Chop onions
- Grind tomatoes and hot pepper
- Pound dry fish

Cooking

- Put oil on fire
- Add chopped onions to oil and allow to fry
- Add ground vegetables
- Add powdered fish
- Add bouillon tablet and water
- Cover and allow to boil
- Add salt to taste
- Add beaten or pounded okra
- Allow to boil for a few minutes and bring off fire

Serve with tuo zaafi, banku or kenkey



Baobab

Scientific names: *Adansonia digitata*

Common names:

Local names: Kuuka (Hausa), tukari (Northern Region), tukaara (Upper East Region), tokura zon, tukuru koomo (Upper West Region)

Fish baobab (dry) leaves soup

Ingredients

- 75 g dry baobab leaves powder (kuuka)
- 50 g dawadawa
- 50 g fish powder
- 15 g fresh hot pepper
- 120 g fresh onion
- 160 g fresh tomato
- 10 g bouillon tablet
- 50 g tomato paste
- 100 ml palm oil
- 500 ml water
- Salt to taste

Preparation

- Grind tomato, onion and hot pepper
- Chop onion
- Pound dry fish
- Pound dawadawa

Cooking

- Put palm oil on fire and allow to heat
- Add chopped onions to hot oil and allow to fry until onions are cooked
- Add ground vegetables
- Add bouillon tablet and water
- Allow to boil
- Add fish powder and salt
- Add water, stir, cover and allow to boil until cooked
- Sprinkle baobab leaf (kuuka) powder in bits and stir to avoid lump formation
- Cover and allow to boil until cooked

Fish okra stew

Ingredients

- 220 g okra
- 200 g garden eggs
- 50 g palm oil
- 130 g fresh tomato
- 15 g fresh hot pepper
- 75 g smoked fish
- 30 g fish powder
- 150 g onion
- 10 g bouillon tablet
- 90 g meat (optional)
- 10 g ginger
- 500 ml water
- Salt to taste



Preparation

- Wash and cut garden eggs and okra into pieces
- Wash fish, remove bones and waste, and break into pieces
- Chop onions
- Grind tomatoes, hot pepper, onions and ginger

Cooking

- Put oil on fire to heat
- Add chopped onions to fry
- Add ground vegetables
- Add smoked fish and bouillon tablet and a little water
- Cover and allow to boil
- Add salt to taste, stir and add cut garden eggs
- Add cut okra and stir when garden eggs are half-cooked
- Add chopped onions and allow to cook
- Remove from fire and serve

Serve with banku, eba, kenkey



Amaranth

Scientific names: *Amaranthus cruentus* L., *A. lividus*, *A. dubius*

Common names: Amaranth

Local names: Aleefu, aleefi

Amaranth leaves stew

Ingredients

- 550 g amaranth leaves
- 430 g tomatoes
- 200 g onion
- 70 g tomato paste
- 15 g hot pepper
- 50 g fish powder
- 250 g agushi (melon seed)
- 10 g bouillon tablet
- 15 g ginger
- 10 g garlic (fresh)
- 2700 ml water
- Salt to taste

Preparation

- Sort aleefu leaves, clean and wash with 30 g of salt water (brine)
- Cut leaves into pieces and blanch
- Wash and grind hot pepper and tomatoes
- Scrape ginger, rinse in clean water and grind
- Slice onion
- Grind the agushi into a soft paste (or dry)

Cooking

- Put palm oil on fire to heat
- Add onion and allow to fry
- Add ground tomatoes and hot pepper
- Add tomato paste, stir and let it boil
- Stir, cover and allow to simmer
- Add bouillon tablet and salt to taste
- Add agushi, to form lumps and cook without stirring
- Stir to mix evenly after lumps formation
- Add blanched amaranth leaves, stir and allow to simmer for a few minutes
- Bring off fire and serve



Serve with plain boiled rice, boiled yam, banku or kenkey

Remarks

Meat and/or fish can be substituted for fish powder. Wash all vegetables, especially leafy greens, with enough water until clean, preferably three times; add salt to the last washing water.

Shito



Ingredients

- 300 ml vegetable oil
- 140 g fresh onion
- 250 g fresh tomatoes
- 50 g dry whole hot pepper
- 40 g ginger
- 50 g fish powder
- 10 g bouillon tablet
- 200 ml water
- Salt to taste

Preparation

- Pound dry hot pepper together with fresh ginger
- Pound dry fish
- Grind tomatoes and hot pepper
- Chop onion

Cooking

- Heat oil
- Add chopped onions and tomatoes
- Cover and allow to cook
- Add ground vegetables, salt and bouillon tablet
- Cover and allow to cook further until all water has evaporated
- Add pounded hot pepper, stir, cover and allow to cook
- Add fish powder and continue stirring to avoid burning
- Cook until sauce is dark brown in colour
- Take off the heat and serve





Sieving sobolo drink

DRINKS

Tamarind

Scientific names: *Adansonia digitata*

Common names: Tamarind

Local names: Puha, tankwa bia, puhe, puhi (Upper West) Saamia (Hausa)

Tamarind Drink

Ingredients

- 200 g tamarind seed (peeled including seeds)
- 2500 ml water
- 80 g ginger
- 3 g alligator pepper
- 5 g cloves
- Sugar to taste



Preparation

- Scrape and wash ginger
- Wash and grind all spices
- Soak tamarind overnight (optional)

Cooking

- Boil water and pour over tamarind
- Soak for several hours (or overnight)
- Mash the mixture for the pulp to come off the seeds
- Add ground spices
- Add more water (3000 ml) and put to boil for 30 minutes
- Put off fire and allow to cool
- Sieve and strain to get rid of particles (spices and pulp)
- Sweeten to taste and serve chilled



Roselle

Scientific names: *Hibiscus sabdariffa*

Common names: Roselle, sorrel

Local names: Bra, suure sobolo



Sobolo Drink (Roselle Calyx Drink)

Ingredients

- 100 g roselle calyces (dry)
- 40 g fresh ginger
- 5 g hwentia (African *Xylopi aethopica*)
- 5 g cloves (exotic *Xylopi aethopica*)
- 300 g sugar
- 4400 ml water (400 ml used to mix spices after grinding)

Preparation

- Pick foreign items from the sorrel leaves
- Wash and scrape ginger
- Grind spices – ginger, hwentia and cloves

Cooking

- Boil roselle calyx with ground spices (method 1)
- Boil water and pour over roselle calyces and leave to stand for 45 minutes (or overnight)
- Add ground spices and stir to mix well (method 2)
- Cover and leave to stand until colour is extracted
- Leave mixture to cool
- Strain liquid and sweeten to taste (common sweeteners – sugar, honey or fruit juice)
- Add flavouring (optional)
- Serve chilled



Different snacks served with porridge.

Top left: spiced sorghum porridge. Top right: spiced millet porridge. Bottom left: spiced corn dough porridge. Bottom right: corn dough porridge.

SNACKS



Roasted groundnuts



Ingredients

- 300 g groundnuts
- 2 tablespoons salt
- 550 ml water
- Sea/river sand

Preparation

- Sort fresh groundnuts and remove foreign materials, stones or dirt
- Sort to have even sizes
- Sieve and wash sand to clean the sand

Cooking

- Put water (enough) in saucepan and add salt
- Cover and allow to boil
- Add groundnuts and allow to boil for 2 minutes
- Strain water off. Spread out and leave in the sun to dry
- Heat pot with river sand (ensure the sand is hot enough)
- Pour in the dried groundnuts and stir (to roast)
- Stir occasionally over low heat to avoid burning of the groundnuts
- Check for doneness by peeling and/or tasting a seed of groundnut
- Bring off fire when groundnuts are light brown in colour and cooked
- Pour into a metal colander or cane basket and shake to separate sand from the roasted groundnuts
- Spread out to cool

Serve with corn, millet or sorghum porridge, fried or roasted

Koose (fried cowpea bean cake)



Ingredients

- 450 g cowpea (dehusked) flour
- 270 ml oil (for deep frying)
- 50 g ginger
- 15 g fresh or dry hot pepper
- 75 g onion (optional)
- 1 tablespoon salt
- 1000 ml water

Preparation

- Mix water with cowpea flour and beat in a circular motion until mixture is fluffy
- Scrape ginger
- Wash and grind ginger, hot pepper and onion
- Add ground spices (ginger, hot pepper and onion) and salt to cowpea flour in bits and continue to beat
- Add water and stir to mix evenly and to obtain a soft dropping consistency

Cooking

- Put oil on fire and deodorize by adding chopped onions
- Drop mixture by spoonfuls in the hot oil and fry, turning occasionally until golden brown (frying may take about 3 minutes)
- Take the cakes from hot oil, drain in a colander and place on kitchen paper to extract excess oil
- Serve hot with corn, millet or sorghum porridge or alone as a snack



Porridge

Corn dough flour porridge

Ingredients

- 200 g corn dough flour
- 2500 ml water

Preparation

- Mix corn dough with enough water and sieve

Cooking

- Put water on fire to boil
- Add sieved mixture to boiling water and stir vigorously to avoid formation of lumps
- Add more water if necessary
- Stir, and allow to boil until cooked
- Serve hot

Spiced corn dough porridge

Ingredients

- 400 g spiced corn dough
- 2500 ml water

Preparation

- Mix corn dough with enough water and sieve

Cooking

- Put water on fire to boil
- Add sieved mixture to boiling water and stir vigorously to avoid formation of lumps
- Allow to boil until it is cooked
- Serve hot

Spiced sorghum dough porridge

Ingredients

- 200 g spiced sorghum dough
- 2300 ml water

Preparation

- Mix spiced sorghum dough with enough water and sieve

Cooking

- Put water on fire to boil
- Add sieved mixture to boiling water and stir vigorously to avoid formation of lumps
- Allow it to boil until it is cooked and serve hot.

Spiced millet flour porridge

Ingredients

- 200 g spiced millet flour
- 1500 ml water

Preparation

- Mix spiced millet flour with enough water to form a dough
- Leave dough to ferment (preferably overnight)
- Mix dough with enough water and sieve

Cooking

- Put water on fire to boil
- Add sieved mixture to boiling water and stir vigorously to avoid formation of lumps
- Allow it to boil until it is cooked and serve hot.

Remarks

Porridge is prepared in most parts of the country. In Northern Ghana, porridge is spiced, and usually referred to as hausa koko.



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