

HOT SPICY AKARA

By Kenny Oni



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Lagos, Nigeria



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Akara, also known as bean cake, is made of beans with a little pepper, tomatoes, onions, and other ingredients of your choice. It is best consumed while fairly hot. Akara can be served with pap, a corn extract made with sugar, milk, and water. Akara is a type of food that is high in protein from the beans. Most homes in Nigeria serve akara and pap on weekends since the meal is both filling and light.



Serves 2-3

INGREDIENTS

1 ½ cups black-eyed beans
¼ to ½ cup water (to blend)
1 medium onion
½ to 1 scotch bonnet pepper,
to taste
1 tsp salt
2 seasoning cubes
4 cups vegetable oil (for
frying)

For corn pap:

1 cup of fermented cornstarch
½ cup of room-temperature
water
3 cups or less of boiling water
Milk to taste
Sugar or sweetener to taste

METHOD

1. Prepare the beans by soaking and removing the skin on them. The washing and skinning can be done days in advance. When ready to use, simply soak the beans for at least 2 hours.
2. Place the soaked beans into a sturdy blender and begin to pulse until smooth. Add a tablespoon of water at a time to facilitate the blending process. The batter should be quite thick, otherwise, the beans will disperse in the oil.
3. Add the onion and scotch bonnet pepper to the blender and pulse until smooth.
4. Transfer the mixture to a bowl. Add the seasoning cubes and salt, then mix them into the batter.
5. Whip the batter for about 2 minutes to incorporate air into the mixture. For extra fluffy bean cakes, whip with a handheld whisk until the mixture doubles in volume.
6. Heat the cooking oil in a small to medium-sized saucepan. Test the readiness of the oil by adding a shaved piece of ginger. If it sizzles and rises to the top, the oil is hot enough.
7. Using a tablespoon to scoop the batter, spoon it into the oil. You will see them puff up into round balls. Fry and allow to cook for 3 to 4 minutes. Turn them in the oil to ensure they are evenly browned. Once cooked, scoop them out of the oil and allow them to drain on a paper towel.
8. To prepare the corn pap: Pour your fermented corn starch into a bowl and mix with 4 tablespoons of room temperature water to get a slurry (runny consistency).
9. Boil 3 cups of water. The water must be hot! Stir your fermented corn starch slurry well to crush any lumps, and gradually add in your boiling water while continuously stirring.
10. Continue adding boiled water and stirring until the mixture thickens or to desired consistency.
11. Your pap is ready to serve! You can add milk and sugar to taste.

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