

A Culture Seen Through Cuisine: Traditional Zanzibari Recipes

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Abstract

Zanzibari cuisine was studied through the collecting of traditional and typical recipes. Along with the ingredients and cooking methods, further information about Zanzibari culinary traditions was gathered, such as historical origins of certain dishes, their special religious and ceremonial uses, as well as any superstitions or beliefs surrounding particular foods. All of this information was then compiled into a cookbook.

Introduction

To accurately describe and capture the essence of a particular culture is a monumental task, as the term ‘culture’ is so broad, and really quite abstract. The cuisine of a certain group of people, however, takes away the abstraction and becomes a tangible depiction of the culture, and a pathway to understanding a people’s history, beliefs, values, ideals, and traditions. The ways that various people around the world adapt to their land and learn to exploit their natural resources, how they come to reject or esteem certain foods and create a cuisine reveals a great deal about the people. Food provides a basis around which families and communities bond, whether it be for celebrations, rituals, religious ceremonies, or simply daily meals.

Studying a people through their food seems especially pertinent to Zanzibar, as its history and economic development was based largely on spices and other food products. Known around the world as the ‘Spice Islands’, the archipelago’s affluence in the late 19th century can be attributed in great part to cloves and its great variety of spices. Recently settled Arabs and other Zanzibaris used spices to integrate themselves into international trade. The strongest foreign influences in the country that resulted were Arab and Indian, who mixed with the original African population. Although there are other influences, these three dominate modern culture and cuisine in Zanzibar. African influence can be seen in the popular staple crops such as cassava and plantains as well as particular spiritual beliefs and superstitions surrounding food. The Arab influences can be seen in Islamic food restrictions and traditional foods and culinary traditions for holidays, as well as particular dishes that were brought from the Middle East such as *halwa*, *pilau*

and *boko boko* (appendices, pg. 28, 24). One can note the culinary influence of India from the ubiquitous *chapati*, *biriani*, and *samosas* (appendices pg. 37, 23, 35), as well as various cooking methods.

The people of Zanzibar are therefore a unique mix of many different foreign influences, making the cuisine and the culture that surrounds it one of the most fascinating in the world. As Pemba and Unguja are slowly developing and Western culture is beginning to seep in, the vibrant, melting-pot culture and traditional ways may soon begin to fade. While globalization proceeds at a fast pace in the 21st century, it seems more important than ever to preserve and record local and regional traditions, such as cuisine.

Study Area

Information for this project was collected in the Chake Chake and Vitongoji regions of the island of Pemba. Chake Chake is the largest and most populous city in Pemba, and is located on the central west coast. Vitongoji is a much smaller town, located just a few kilometers east of Chake. Pemba is part of the Zanzibar archipelago in the Indian Ocean off the coast of Tanzania, and is relatively more conservative and traditional in comparison with its sister island, Unguja, which has become more developed and exposed to western influence through tourism. Both Pemba and Zanzibar were originally settled by people of the African Bantu language group, but as a post for international trade, the island has been influenced by many different cultures, most notably Portuguese, Arabs, Indians, and British. Zanzibar gained independence from the British in 1963 and joined mainland Tanganyika after the revolution in 1964 to become the United Republic of Tanzania as it remains today (Singer, 112-115).

Methodology

Almost three weeks were spent in the Chake Chake and Vitongoji regions of Pemba collecting recipes from ten different women. When possible, I accompanied the women on trips to the market observing not only the culture of the market, but also which foods were available and abundant. I would then observe, record, and participate in cooking different dishes, noting the methods and ingredients. While the food was cooking, through informal interviews with the women, I gathered background information about the role of food in Zanzibari culture, such as religion, spiritual beliefs, and historical information. After three weeks were spent collecting this data, I returned to Unguja to practice the recipes myself as well as compile this cookbook.

Results

Food as a historical timeline

Being a part of the 2000 year old Indian Ocean trade route allowed Zanzibar's economy to flourish. Along with the influx of economic wealth came people from other countries and their cultural influences. Before becoming a part of this trade system, however, people from various parts of the world had some sort of contact with the islands.

The original inhabitants of Zanzibar were members of the Bantu language group, coming from mainland Africa. Their influence on cuisine today can be seen in common foods such as plantains and beans, which continue to be staples in the Zanzibari diet. Dishes similar or identical to *msamwija*, *mseto*, *ndizi wa nazi*, and *maharage wa nazi* are said to have been eaten by these people (appendices pg. 32, 28, 33, 30). Although very little is known about these original inhabitants, there is evidence that they "believed strongly in the spirit world, and often sacrificially slaughtered animals and feasted on the meat together as a way of appeasing spirits" (Salrant, 170-184). Over the years, this practice has blended with Islam, and different forms of feasting for appeasing spirits is still very common.

Islam was introduced to Zanzibar around the beginning of the 10th century. Today it is by far the dominant religion on the archipelago, and its influences on cuisine are most apparent in dietary restrictions. Both alcohol and pork are considered to be physically and spiritually unclean and are forbidden. Along with Islam came Arab cuisine, and the most common dishes in Zanzibar with middle-eastern origin include

halwa, *boko boko*, and *pilau* (appendices pg. 24, 28). Cloves, the islands most important export, were introduced from Mauritius by the Omani Arabs, and began cultivating large clove plantations farmed by slaves. The islands became known as *al khudra* - the green islands. The profits from the clove harvest may have declined in recent years but they are still an important ingredient in dishes such as *pilau* or *biriani* and they are used in local medicine to relieve toothache and stomach problems (appendices pg. 28, 23) (Singer, 87-90).

Around the 15th century, Portuguese explorers made contact with Zanzibar and introduced food crops gathered on earlier voyages (mostly in the Americas), such as maize, cassava, cashew and jojoba trees, avocado and guava. (Singer 223). Cassava is now a staple in Zanzibar, and is a main ingredient in *msamwija* and *muhogo wa nazi* (appendices pg. 32). The Portuguese also introduced the concept of marinating meat or fish. This cooking method is very common now, and is used in dishes such as *samaki wa kupaka* (appendix pg. 27).

Indian merchants began coming to Zanzibar in the early 19th century, and a large Indian population remains in Zanzibar today. Along with their culinary influences, they have also introduced Hinduism to the islands. Indian culinary influence can be seen in foods such as *samosas*, *chapati*, *biriani*, and various types of curries (appendices pg. 35, 37, 23).

Food in rite, purification, and spiritual beliefs

With Islam as the dominant religion, in general, the Swahili view of the world is based on the acceptance of God's power, compassion, and order. "They see evil, ill-health, and moral pollution as being everywhere, and every person and community must continually counter them to purify and so reconstruct flawed sectors of experience" (McNee, 172). The rites of sacrifice and purification lie at the heart of religion for the people of Zanzibar, and the ceremonies almost always involve feasting or food in some form. The two essential functions of sacrifice are to give gift offerings to show dependence and respect towards God; and oblation with the aim to purify and expel any evil or sickness.

There are basically two different kinds of sacrifice, one being called *sadaka*, and the other *tambiko*. *Sadaka* is an offering and feast of meat, for example *akika*, which is a feast of goat meat to mark a child's first tooth, or *fidya* – a rite to cure a sick person by slaughtering an animal then giving it to the poor as charity. *Tambiko* is a method of sacrifice that is usually found in more rural areas where adherence to orthodox Islam is looser. It typically includes a blood sacrifice made to ancestors along with a feast and the sharing of beer. These are usually made to remove sickness or to seek protection by ancestors, but the method is disapproved by strict orthodox Muslims (Salrant, 199-2002).

Sadaka is a rite for preventing evil and many times involves food. The giving of ritual alms, a public expression of Muslim duty, is the most common kind of *sadaka*. One example is the food that people donate to mosques during Maulidi. Another example is a tradition called *Mwaka* or *Nauroz*, which used to be very common, but is now almost non-existent. This pre-Islamic tradition involves the slaughtering a bull for each town,

then sharing a feast of its meat. Traditionally, the bull was led counterclockwise around the town, followed by its ritual slaughter by both men and women (and even slaves in the past), then the feast of the meat was shared by the whole town. This feast and ceremony was a symbolic deconstruction of the main hierarchy of the town, followed by its purified reconstruction. The decline of this tradition is due mainly to social, ethnic, and demographic changes that have made traditional town structures obsolete. In most places, this New Years rite has been replaced by the feast of *Id al-fitr* at the end of Ramadan.

Another kind of purification rite commonly involving food is called *kafara* which, unlike the preventative *sadaka*, is a rite of purification to remove any evil or pollution that is already present. An *mganga* (or witch doctor) will prescribe an animal to be slaughtered then shared in a feast to remove a sickness sent by certain spirits. The food that is cooked supposedly takes into itself any pollution of the house and its occupants; the food takes any danger with it. Part of the food is eaten by the affected person and other members of the household, then the rest is either thrown into the sea or placed beside a grave where the “pollution” is safely neutralized.

Evil spirits and superstitions used to be common in Zanzibar, though in recent years these beliefs have been disappearing at a fast pace. One belief that is still very common, however, is that it is unlucky to sell salt after dark as it will attract evil spirits that come out at night. This can be seen in the Swahili proverb:

Kuuza chumvi usiku ni nuksi kwa mwenye duka.

Selling salt at night brings ill luck to the shopkeeper (Aral, 39).

In periods of purification and seclusion, whether they be for childbirth, death, marriage, etc. there is an importance placed on food sharing, closing these rites with a

feast to which family, friends, and neighbors are invited. These feasts are often both cooperative and competitive, as people are proud to contribute as much as they possibly can.

Childbirth

In some places, when a woman realizes she is pregnant, the rite of separation called *kutia hijabuni* is performed to shelter her from evil spirits known as *shiatani*. Among other things, this rite involves the sharing of a meal called *tangalazi* with her close female kin. The meal is made of a grain, usually rice, and coconut. It can be any number of dishes, but some common ones are *wali wa nazi* or *mseto* (appendices pg. 21, 32). Sometimes after the meal the grains are thrown over the pregnant woman's face while her face, wrists, and feet are washed in coconut milk.

Once the woman gives birth, both the mother and the child must go through a purification process as the 'impurity' of childbirth affects them both. Typically, the baby is kept inside for eight days while the mother is kept inside for 40. After 40 days of ceremonial cleansing and seclusion, there is a large feast shared by family and friends, known as either *haramu* (meaning feast), *hitima* (which essentially means to conclude a reading of the Koran by giving a feast), or *arobaini* (which simply means forty). These practices with regard to childbirth are becoming less and less common, and are really only carried out in rural areas (DuBois, 103).

Marriage

The process of engagement and marriage includes a large amount of food for both symbolic and practical reasons. While many modern Zanzibaris do not strictly adhere to the following traditions, many at least carry out some form of these ceremonies. Once the proposal has occurred, the families of the bride and groom get to know each other through various visits to each house. Once the proposal is accepted, the bride's family invites female kin to spend a day making food together. Immediately before the wedding, the bride is secluded while both families meet. On the day of *kualika* (to invite), female kin are invited to visit the bride. As they enter the house they are offered *chai* and *samosas* (appendices pg. 45, 35). During this visiting period, guests participate in dancing and are usually served coffee and *halwa*.

The joining of the lives of the bride and groom are marked by the exchange of personal wedding items between the two sides. On the first day, the female kin of the bride take a gift of snacks called *kupeleka msuaki* to the groom, and the food is eaten by the groom and the men of his vigil. The *msuaki* usually comprises several trays of what is considered 'soft' and 'cool' foods, such as things made with flour, eggs, honey, almonds, and cardamom. Some common foods include *maandazi*, *ndizi mbivu*, *mkate ya maji*, *mkate wa mayai*, *mkate wa ufuta*, and *chila*, among others (appendices pg. 35, 42, 40, 39, 40, 38). The emphasis is on being 'soft' because the meal that will later be served to the groom will consist of 'hot' and 'hard' items. These foods are eaten without rice because they are not considered feasts, but rather they are symbols representing the stages towards their new relationship.

If the bride's father is wealthy enough, on the day that the formal agreement of marriage is signed and witnessed he provides coffee and *halwa* to all the

guests. This gift of food to the other side of the family is a symbol of recognition that they are now formally linked as kin. That night, after the final prayers, there is what is called the rite of *kutia nyumbani* (to put inside the house). Female kin from both sides as well as a few of the groom's close male kin go into the house where a snack is served, again without rice so it is not a proper meal. The groom eats only a small portion, then once most of the guests have left the bride and groom share a cup of milk, which represents softness and purity. The groom is given a betel leaf to chew to give him strength. They are then served more food without rice. The groom is given dove meat, which is considered to be a 'hot' food for strength. The bride is given 'soft' foods for tranquility and happiness. The sharing of food and drink represents the sharing of identities.

The following day is for the wedding feast called *lima*, which is given by the bride's family. Later the groom's family will give a feast to his kin also. These feasts typically consist of celebration foods such as *samosas*, *katlesi*, *kachori*, *mishikaki*, *vitumbua*, *kaimati*, *vileja*, *halwa*, juice, and soda (appendices pg. 35, 34, 33, 26, 36, 41, 43). Usually salty things are served first with juice and soda, then sweet foods are served with coffee. While the bride is being dressed, made up, and adorned, the participating females are served juice and sweet cakes such as *mkate wa mayai*, *mkate wa mchele*, and date cake (appendices pg 40, 41).

Death

As with marriage, the place of food in ceremonies surrounding death is important, however these traditions are becoming much less common. Typically when a person dies,

it is the widow that must go through the most extensive ceremonies and mourning period traditions. On the day of the burial, the period of mourning, called *matanga*, and of the widow's seclusion, *eda*, begin. These traditionally last for four months and ten days, with the end being marked with a large feast known as *kukunja jamvi* (to roll up the mat). During the mourning period, the widow must observe certain food taboos, which are different for each person, and are often decided by an *mganga* (witch doctor). She is also required to fast on every Friday of *matanga*. During this time the kin of the deceased make regular visits to the grave, making offerings of meat and rice at the mosque. These offerings are usually dishes such as *wali wa nazi*, *pilau*, and/or *mchuzi ya nyama* (appendices pg. 29, 28). These practices are considered necessary because during these four months she is not yet an *mjane*, a widow, but a *kizuka*, a ghost. Essentially she is a non-person who is potentially 'polluting' to those around her and she therefore observes these taboos in order to protect others (Heldke, 140).

Religion

Islam is the dominant religion on Zanzibar, and probably the most important Islamic holiday involving food is Ramadan, sometimes referred to as *Mwezi wa Tumu* (month of fasting). Ramadan occurs for one month every year and during that month observant Muslims will fast from sunrise to sunset. The Swahili *shawwal*, which follows Ramadan and opens with the break-fast festival of *Id al-fitr*, is called *mfungo mosi* (the first releasing). Before Ramadan begins, there is a period called *kula mfungo*, a time for sharing food with friends and family, and feasting and celebration before the fast (Jerom, 112).

During Ramadan, most people fast all day until sunset prayers. Many restaurants are also closed for either the whole month or just during fasting times. At sunset, the call to evening prayer is proclaimed and the first food is eaten. In most mosques, prayers are delayed a few minutes for a snack (usually dates and cookies) to be eaten with fruit juice or coffee. Once evening prayers have finished, the break-fast meal called *futari* is eaten at home, and guests are almost always invited, especially if they have no family with whom to share *futari*. This meal is the biggest of the day, and heavier foods such as *pilau*, *wali wa nazi*, *mchuzi wa nyama* (appendices pg. 28, 29) are typically eaten. *Daku* is the meal eaten before dawn, and light foods such as *chapati*, *chai*, *maandazi*, etc. are served (appendices pg. 37, 45, 35). A long time ago there were groups of drummers that would march around town before sunrise to wake people up so no one missed the *daku*. On the first day after the end of Ramadan, those drummers would go from house to house with baskets and families would give them rice or other food donations. Another tradition that is fading (and has disappeared in some places) is students bringing *maandazi* to their teachers at mosque after evening prayers (appendix pg.35).

If a couple gets engaged during Ramadan, the woman's family is traditionally supposed to prepare a dinner called *bembe* to send to her fiancé's home on one evening during the final ten days of the fast. The fiancé's family will not prepare *futari* on that day because they know they'll be getting a big meal and usually invite many friends and family. During the few days before the end of Ramadan, each house donates an obligatory gift of food to the poor based on the number of people in the house. The donation (usually rice) is supposed to be two and a half times the amount of food eaten

by the entire household in a day. This is done so that no Muslim goes without food on the feast day.

On the day of *Id al-fitr*, everyone cooks large meals and are expected to be able to provide food for anyone who comes in their home. Neighbors and friends exchange dishes and people go around visiting each other and feasting together. While there are no rules as to which dishes must be prepared on this day, some of the common dishes are *mchuzi wa nyama* (sometimes made with goat for this holiday), *samaki wa kupaka*, *pilau*, *kuku paka*, *kachori*, *katlesi*, *ndizi wa nazi*, *vileja*, *kaimati*, *mkate wa mchele*, and *halwa* (appendices 27, 28, 26, 33, 34, 33, 41, 41, 40).

An interesting and almost oxymoronic concept that was pointed out to me by one of the women that I cooked with was that however difficult it is to get food in the other 11 months, there is always more than enough food during Ramadan. After Ramadan, of course, hunger returns to the poor. This concept is embodied in a verse commonly sung towards the end of the last night of the fast, just before *daku*:

Fungate imekwisha. Dari suudi sokota mt'u wako

Ramadan has finished now. Hunger (you can begin again) to make your victim suffer your pangs (Hafner, 203).

Discussion

As I said before, examining a people's cuisine can reveal a great deal about not only their history, but also their values, ideals, and spiritual beliefs. On top of the very revealing information about religion and the spirit world, the ideals most apparent to me while studying Zanzibari cuisine were the strong emphasis on sharing and charity, as well as the strict gender roles in the culture.

The emphasis on sharing and charity is exemplified perfectly in the Swahili proverb,

Fisi mwenye mtoto hali na kumaliza chakula.

The hyena with a cub does not consume all the available food (Tourant, 111). "In many cases in Swahili folklore, the hyena is the symbol of being always hungry, but, in spite of this strong trait, it is also deeply caring. People believe that when it finds food it will always leave some for its cubs, even in its great hunger" (Tourant, 112). The parent hyena has an ability to find food that the cubs do not, so it spares food for them and denies its own needs, even when it may not get enough to still its own hunger. This proverb was described to me as the hyena cubs representing those in need, while the parent hyena represents the people that can afford food. Therefore, people in Zanzibar see feeding others as a priority, even if they themselves don't have much money; if everyone shares a little, everyone will eat something.

These ideals of sharing and charity can also be seen in the practice of inviting guests over for *futari* during Ramadan, then always having enough food to share feasts

with your neighbors and friends during *Id al-fitr*. These values can also be seen in the simple custom of always providing a guest with food whenever they are in your home. During a walk with my host mom in Pemba, I remember seeing a woman who was clearly hungry and possibly homeless lying on the street. It seemed like everyone that walked by was giving her food, and my host mom turned to me and said, 'For people in Pemba, there may not always be enough money; but because we share no one ever goes hungry'. Although there clearly are people that do go hungry on Pemba, this idea of charity is much stronger than in other societies, such as the United States.

The strict gender roles in Zanzibari culture also became very apparent to me while studying cooking. Women in Zanzibar dominate the domestic sphere, while men are much more involved in public life. As one man told me, 'the kitchen is a woman's office; men must ask permission before entering'. Most girls begin learning how to cook right around the age of 13 or 14, and some of the women who I worked with were shocked that many girls my age in America don't know how to cook. 'But how will they ever get married? How will they take care of their husbands?' they asked me. It was a concept they almost couldn't comprehend.

On top of these ideals, there is a lot to be said about the place of food in Zanzibari religious and spiritual life. The role that food plays in this case is largely for purification and rites. The sacrificing of an animal to appease spirits, the sharing of specific foods by a bride and groom, or dietary taboos of a mother who has just given birth may seem silly to us as outsiders, but people carry out these practices and hold these beliefs for many good reasons. In this case, food mainly serves as a symbolic and tangible manifestation of

people's attempts to understand and therefore control situations of uncertainty, ill-health, or lack of success. The attempt to understand why we are on earth, why we have problems, why we die, and struggling with the concept of God is a part of the human condition. There is an inherent uncertainty in birth, sickness, marriage, and death, and the use of food in these situations is simply a vehicle in helping us to come to an understanding. Most everyone has ways of dealing with these uncertainties, whether it be through prayer, reading holy text, meditation, or going to Church, Mosque, etc. The symbolic use of food in Zanzibari religious life is therefore not frivolous at all (as it may seem to us); it is just another spiritual practice. Food is just one of the many methods we as humans use to materialize the intangible and ground us in moments of uncertainty.

Conclusion

After conducting this study, I believe even more strongly that studying the cuisine the cuisine of a particular group of people is one of the most revealing and informative tools for learning about a culture. As humans, we base our daily lives around food; it is not only a part of mundane daily life, but also forms a basis around which things such as celebrations, ceremonies, folklore, rituals, etc. develop. Therefore, a particular cuisine will logically contain a wealth of information about the people that created it. Clearly my study was limited due to the fact that I really only had the time to gather a small collection of recipes and capture only a fraction of Zanzibari culture.

Although as a whole this study was a positive experience, I did note some disappointing trends. The first thing I noticed was that the economic situation of most Zanzibaris today does not always allow them to make use of and enjoy their rich, varied, and complex cuisine. Food items such as honey, meats, and certain spices are very expensive for most families and these are considered luxuries. While the recipes in this cookbook may make it seem as though the people of Zanzibar eat delicious feasts and extravagant dishes on a regular basis, the truth is that most can only afford to eat basic things such as bread, rice, and tea. Perhaps if people had the economic opportunity, Zanzibari cuisine would be morphing, developing, and becoming more complex naturally along with the culture, but there isn't much room for change when there is no money.

The second disappointing trend I noted was the general fading of traditional recipes and cooking methods. The women I worked with are from an older generation

and they were constantly telling me about how the young people today aren't learning these traditions. Most of them attributed it to the fact that kids today are more interested in the television, pop music, and other modern influences that are a result of globalization on Pemba, an island that only recently began to develop and open up to the Western world. The situation is even more drastic on Unguja where tourism has a stronger presence and Western influence is much more obvious. There are many restaurants that cater to foreigners by either changing or completely ignoring Zanzibari cuisine. Not only is this sad because traditions are fading, but it also means that the tourists that come to Zanzibar aren't learning as much about the local culture. In my opinion, the best way for people from different countries to learn to get along and share a world that is getting smaller every day, is simply to learn about and better understand each others' cultures. As I stated before, I feel that one of the greatest ways to accomplish this task is through learning about the cuisine of a particular people. That is why it seems more crucial than ever to record and preserve traditions, such as cuisine, before they are overtaken by the ever-growing and homogenous 'global culture'.

Recommendations

If someone wanted to continue collecting recipes, I definitely recommend learning from older women who know the more traditional methods and recipes. I would also suggest arranging a home stay with them to be able to easily observe daily life in a typical Zanzibari kitchen.

If someone wanted to do a slightly different study, it would be interesting to explore the historical and ecological aspects of Zanzibari cuisine. An in-depth study of native and introduced crops, their economic, cultural, and ecological influences in relation to Zanzibar's history as a whole could be the basis for a very interesting project.

Fish, Meat, Poultry

Biriani

Ingredients

- 1 unripe papaya, grated
- 3.5 cups cooked rice
- Juice of 4 limes
- 2 cups plain yogurt
- 2-3 lbs meat
- 5 small onions, chopped
- 5 medium potatoes, chopped
- 2 cloves garlic, finely chopped
- 1/2 tsp. ground cardamom
- 4 cloves
- 1 tsp. crushed ginger
- oil for frying
- 1 cinnamon stick
- 1/2 tsp. cumin seed
- 1/2 tsp. coriander seed
- 1/2 tsp. black pepper
- salt to taste
- 3 small tomatoes, chopped
- 3 Tbsp. tomato paste

Method

1. With mortar and pestle, mash papaya, garlic, and ginger into paste
2. In large pot, add papaya mixture to meat, yogurt, and lime juice. Cover, let cook on low heat, stirring every few minutes
3. Heat a little oil in pan, fry onions until brown and remove
4. Fry potatoes, set aside
5. Grind spices (cardamom, cloves, cinnamon, cumin, coriander, peppercorn, salt), add to meat mixture
6. Add tomatoes, tomato paste, and a little oil from pan (where onions and potatoes were cooking) and keep cooking over low heat
7. Preheat oven to 370 degrees (f)
8. Cover the bottom of a large baking dish with 1/3 of the cooked rice. Add most of the potatoes on top of that, then pour most of the meat mixture over the potatoes and rice. Layer another 1/3 of the rice, some of the onions, then the rest of the meat mixture, then put the rest of the potatoes and onions on top.
9. Bake for 20-30 minutes

Boko Boko (Meat Porridge)

Ingredients

- About 2-3 lbs meat (lamb, beef, or chicken)
- 3.5 cups wheat
- a few spoons of butter
- 1.2 tsp. cumin powder
- 1 cinnamon stick
- salt and pepper

Method

1. Rinse wheat, soak overnight
 2. Put meat in pot with 10 cups water
 3. Add spices
 4. Cover, boil for about 10 minutes, remove from pot
 5. Add wheat, stir, cover, turn down heat so mixture simmers, but doesn't boil
 6. Use fork to shred meat from bones
 7. Add meat to wheat; stir until combined
 8. Cover and cook 2.5 hours over low heat (adding water when necessary)
 9. Once wheat is cooked, add butter and mix
- *Note: Some people eat this with fried onions, lemon, or milk and sugar (but if this is added, it usually isn't cooked with cumin)

Kuku Paka (Chicken in Coconut Milk)

Ingredients

- Oil for frying (a few spoonfuls)
- 2 small onions, chopped
- 1 clove garlic, finely chopped
- 1/2 tsp. ginger, mashed
- 1 green bell pepper, chopped
- 1 tsp. curry powder
- 1 tsp. salt
- A few cloves to taste (optional)
- 1 chicken, cut into pieces
- 1 cup water
- 4 medium potatoes, chopped into bite-sized pieces
- 3-4 tomatoes, chopped
- 2 cups coconut milk

Method

1. In a large pot, heat oil and sauté onions, peppers, and garlic until light brown
2. Add ginger, curry, cloves, and salt
3. Add chicken to pot, brown on all sides, remove.
4. Add water to pot, and once it has come to a boil add potatoes and cook about 5-10 minutes.
5. Add chicken to pot, and cook until chicken and potatoes are done
6. Add tomatoes and coconut milk; turn heat down and simmer until sauce has thickened slightly. Serve with lime juice.

Mchuzi wa Samaki (Fish Curry)

Ingredients

- Oil for frying
- About 1.5 cups coconut milk
- 6-7 cloves garlic
- 2 small green peppers, chopped
- 2 small onions, chopped
- 3 tomatoes, chopped
- 1/2-1 tsp. tamarind paste
- 2 tsp. curry powder
- salt to taste
- Fish (about 3 pounds)

Method

1. In saucepan over medium-high heat, add enough oil to cover the bottom. Once oil

- is hot, sear fish on both sides (just enough to cook the outside of the fish, but not the inside).
2. Turn heat down to low, remove oil from pan. Add coconut milk and tamarind paste to pan with fish.
 3. Add tomatoes, garlic, onions, and spices to pan. Bring everything to a simmer and cook until fish is cooked all the way through and the sauce has thickened.

Mishikaki (Meat Skewers)

Ingredients

- 1-2 lbs. beef, cut into small, bite sized pieces.
- 2 cloves garlic, finely chopped
- 1/2 tsp. curry powder or tamarind paste (although it is okay to use both, if you want
- 1 tsp. mashed ginger
- 1 tomato, peeled and finely chopped
- 2 Tbsp. oil
- 2 Tbsp. water

Method

1. Combine all ingredients except meat in a bowl.
2. Add meat to marinade, stir, let sit either overnight (refrigerated), or if cooking the same day, the meat must marinate at least one hour.
3. Place meat on skewers.
4. Grill until meat is cooked.

Mkate ya Maji na Nyama ya Kusaga (Pancakes with Minced Meat)

Ingredients

- 2 cups flour
- 1/4 cup water
- 4 eggs
- Pinch of salt
- Pepper

- 1/4 cup ghee, margarine, or oil.
- 2 cups minced meat
- 1 clove garlic, finely chopped
- 1 teaspoon margarine or oil

Method

1. In large bowl, mix water, eggs, flour, salt and oil (or melted margarine/ghee). Mix the ingredients together thoroughly; batter should be smooth and not too thick.
2. In pan over medium-high heat, fry minced meat with salt, pepper, and garlic until golden brown. Take this off the heat, let it cool for about 5 minutes, then add it to the batter.
3. Add a little oil to pan over medium heat. Once oil is heated, add enough of the batter to cover the bottom of the pan in a thin layer. Cook until each side is golden brown. If the batter is too thick, add a little water.

* Note: Some people don't like to use soap when cleaning the pan they use to make these because it makes the pancakes stick. Instead, they clean the pan with makumbi (coconut fibers).

***Samaki wa Kupaka* (Grilled Fish)**

Ingredients

- 1 fish (about 3 lbs.)
- Juice of 4 limes
- 2 cloves garlic
- 1 tsp. cumin
- Salt and pepper

For vegetable sauce:

- 3 small eggplants, peeled
- 8-10 tomatoes, peeled
- 2 small onions
- 1 sweet green pepper
- 3/4 cup water
- 1 tsp. salt
- Juice of 2 limes
- 1.5 cups coconut milk

Method

1. Cut slits on each side of fish; place in baking dish.
2. Squeeze limes over fish.
3. Finely chop the garlic cloves, then rub them into the fish.
4. Sprinkle salt, pepper, and cumin over fish, pressing into the slits.
5. Let the fish sit for about 20-30 minutes, turning it over once or twice.
6. Pour excess marinade into bowl
7. For vegetable sauce: cut eggplant, green pepper, and tomatoes into large chunks, put into a saucepan with the onions
8. Begin cooking vegetables over medium heat, add water and 1 tsp. salt. Crush the vegetables as you cook them.
9. Add lime juice and reserved marinade to vegetables.
10. Add coconut milk, little by little, stirring constantly.
11. Bring mixture to a full boil, then remove from heat.
12. Grill fish. Once it is ready to serve, spoon the vegetable sauce over the fish.

Rice Dishes

Mseto

Ingredients

- 2 cups rice
- 1 cup choroko (small beans)
- 1 cup coconut milk
- 3 cups water
- Salt to taste

Method

1. Boil rice in the 3 cups of water
2. Boil choroko until they are soft
3. Drain choroko and add to rice along with coconut milk and cook until most of the liquid has boiled off
4. Add salt and pepper to taste

Pilau

Ingredients

- 8 cups rice

- 1/2 cup oil for frying
- 3 potatoes
- 3 small onions
- 1 tsp. mashed ginger
- 3-5 cups water
- Salt and pepper to taste

Spice Mixture:

- 1 Tbsp. cardamom pods
- 1 cinnamon stick
- 1 Tbsp. cumin
- 1 tsp. peppercorns
- 1 tsp. cloves

Method

1. Wash, peel, and cut potatoes in quarters
2. Chop onions
3. Pour oil into pot over medium heat
4. Add potatoes and cook until golden brown
5. Remove potatoes, add onions – cook until golden brown.
6. Add garlic and ginger
7. Add 1 cup water, cook about 2 minutes
8. Add all spices; stir
9. Add potatoes and 2 more cups water; bring mixture to a boil
10. Add washed rice; stir
11. Cover, let simmer until rice is cooked (about 20 minutes).

Wali wa Nazi (Coconut Rice)

Ingredients

- 2 cups rice
- 4 cups coconut milk (2 cups thin milk, 2 cups concentrated) *or* 2 cups water and 2 cups concentrated coconut milk
- salt to taste

Method

1. Wash and soak rice
2. Bring the thin coconut milk (or water) to a boil; add rice and salt
3. Cover pot, cook about ten minutes, stirring every once in a while
4. Lower heat, add thick coconut milk. Continue stirring, about 3-5 minutes.
5. Remove from heat; put a few pieces of charcoal on top of lid, let rice cook until all the liquid has boiled off. This will make the top layer of rice dry (it is called *ukoko* – some people like to eat this)

Vegetable Dishes

Boga la Nazi (Pumpkin in Coconut Milk)

Ingredients

- 1 kg pumpkin, peeled, seeded, and cut into bite-sized pieces
- 1 cup thick coconut milk, and 3 cups thin coconut milk
- ¼ tsp cinnamon
- ¼ teaspoon ground cardamom
- 1.5 cups sugar

Method

1. Boil pumpkin in water until nearly cooked.
2. Drain and add thin coconut milk, cinnamon, cardamom, and sugar.
3. Cook on medium heat until the liquid reduced significantly and then add thick coconut milk.
4. Continue cooking until most of the liquid has absorbed

Maharagwe ya Nazi (Beans in Coconut Milk)

Ingredients

- 2 cups dry red beans
- Between 1 and 2 cups coconut milk
- Salt to taste
- 2 cloves garlic, finely chopped
- 1/2 chili pepper, finely chopped
- 2 tomatoes, chopped
- 1 tsp. curry powder *or* 1 tsp mashed ginger

Method

1. Place beans in bowl with enough water to cover them. Soak overnight.
2. Rinse and drain beans
3. Place beans in a pot with enough water to cover the beans. Boil for about 10 minutes.
4. Turn heat down so beans are simmering. Once they are *almost* done (but not

- quite), add the coconut milk, spices, and vegetables.
5. Cook until beans are tender, stirring when necessary.

Mchicha wa Nazi (Spinach in Coconut Milk)

Ingredients

- 1 bunch spinach
- 3 small onions
- Oil for sautéing
- 3 tomatoes
- 1/2 to 1 tsp. curry powder
- Salt to taste
- 2 Tbsp. tomato paste
- 1/2 cup coconut milk

Method

1. Cut spinach into bite-sized pieces; wash
2. Sauté onions in oil over medium heat until slightly brown
3. Add tomatoes, let cook down a little
4. Add salt, curry powder, and tomato paste
5. Turn heat down, add spinach and let steam covered for about ten minutes
6. Remove any excess water and add coconut milk, let cook down about 5-10 more minutes
7. Add more salt if needed

Mchuzi wa Biringani (Eggplant Curry)

Ingredients

- Oil for cooking (a few spoonfuls)
- 2 cloves garlic, finely chopped
- 1 tsp. ginger, mashed
- 2 small onions, chopped
- 1 chili, finely chopped
- 1-2 tsp. curry powder
- 3-4 medium potatoes, chopped
- 3 tomatoes, chopped
- 2 Tbsp. tomato paste
- 1/4 tsp. cayenne
- Salt and pepper to taste
- 1 cup coconut milk
- 2 medium eggplants, peeled and chopped

Method

1. In a large pot, sauté onions in oil over medium/high heat until light brown
2. Add garlic, ginger, chili, curry powder, and salt; sauté a few more minutes
3. Add eggplant and potatoes, once they begin to brown, lower the heat and simmer about ten minutes
4. Add tomatoes and tomato paste, stir
5. Add coconut milk and continue simmering until sauce thickens. Add more salt and pepper to taste.

Msamwija

Ingredients

- 3 medium pieces of cassava, chopped
- 5 plantains, cut into small pieces
- 1 cup concentrated coconut milk, 1 cup thin coconut milk
- Salt to taste

Method

1. Boil cassava in water for 5-6 minutes, remove
2. Boil plantains and cassava in thin coconut milk until a lot of the liquid has been absorbed. Add the concentrated coconut milk and continue to boil until the mixture becomes very thick
3. Add salt to taste

Muhogo wa Nazi (Cassava in Coconut Milk)

Ingredients

- 1 kg cassava
- 3 cups coconut milk
- ¼ Tbsp. ground cardamom

Method

1. Peel cassava, wash and cut into small pieces
2. Boil cassava until almost done
3. Drain cassava and add coconut milk

4. Add cardamom and boil until the cassava is tender and some of the coconut milk absorbs

Ndizi wa Nazi (Plantains in Coconut Milk)

Ingredients

- 4 plantains
- 1/2 tsp curry powder
- A few cloves (to taste)
- Pinch of salt
- 1.5 cups coconut milk

Method

1. Peel plantains, slice into quarters (lengthwise and widthwise)
2. Combine all ingredients except coconut milk in a saucepan, heat slowly on low/medium heat. Add coconut milk little by little until most is absorbed
3. Simmer plantains until tender

Snack/Appetizers

Kachori

Ingredients

- 10 medium potatoes, peeled
- Juice of 10 limes
- 2 chili peppers, finely chopped
- Salt and pepper to taste
- 3 cloves garlic, finely chopped
- Oil for deep frying
- 1/2 cup dengu (lentil) flour (you can use regular flour, if you can't find dengu)
- 1 cup water

Method

1. Boil potatoes until soft, remove from water and mash
2. Add lime juice, chili pepper, garlic, salt, and pepper. Mix thoroughly.
3. Mix flour and water together to make a thin coating for the kachori.

4. Once the potato mixture has cooled, make small balls, then dip them into the flour and water mixture to coat them. Deep fry the kachori in oil until golden brown.

Katlesi za Samaki (Fish Culets)

Ingredients

- 1 lb. (1/2 kilo) fish
- 1/4 teaspoon cinnamon
- 4-5 cloves garlic, finely chopped
- Juice of 3 limes
- 2 medium onions, chopped
- 1/2 chili pepper
- 1/2 tsp black pepper
- 1 lb. (1/2 kilo) potatoes
- 3 eggs
- 1/2 cup *dengu* flour
- Oil for frying

Method

1. Combine fish, garlic, chili, black pepper, salt, cinnamon, onions, lime juice. Mix well. In saucepan, cook with a little oil over medium-low heat, until fish is done. Remove from heat and let cool.
2. While this is cooling, peel and boil potatoes until tender. Remove potatoes from water and mash.
3. Use fork to flake fish into small pieces. Add fish and onions/spices to mashed potatoes, mix well.
4. Take 1 large spoonful of this mixture at a time, forming each into round/oval shapes.
5. Dip each cutlet into beaten eggs, then into *dengu* flour. Heat enough oil in a pan so that cutlets will be almost submerged. Place cutlets in hot oil and fry until golden brown.

Maandazi

Ingredients

- 4 cups flour
- 1/2 cup sugar
- 1/2 tsp. baking soda
- 1 Tbsp. yeast
- 1 tsp. cardamom
- 1.5 cups coconut milk
- 1 Tbsp vegetable oil
- Oil for frying

Method

1. Combine dry ingredients in bowl
2. Add coconut milk and mix thoroughly
3. Knead 8-10 minutes, adding oil as you go
4. Divide dough into 6 large balls, roll each ball into circles about ½ inch thick, then cut each circle into four triangles
5. Let dough rise for about 1 hour in a cool, dry place
6. Deep fry triangles until golden brown

Samosas

Ingredients

For the pastry:

- 2 c flour
- 1/2 tsp. salt
- 4 Tbsp. oil
- 4 Tbsp. water

For the stuffing:

- 4-5 medium potatoes, boiled
- 4 Tbsp. oil
- 1 medium onion, chopped
- 1 cup shelled peas
- 1 Tbsp. mashed ginger
- 1 chili pepper, finely chopped
- 3 Tbsp. water
- 1 1/2 tsp. salt
- 1 tsp. ground coriander seeds
- 1 tsp. ground cumin seeds
- 1/4 tsp. cayenne pepper

- 2 Tbsp. lime juice
- oil for deep frying

Method

1. Sift the flour and salt into a bowl. Add the 4 tablespoons on oil and mix with hands until the mixture resembles coarse breadcrumbs. Slowly add about 4 tablespoons water (or more if needed) and gather the dough into a stiff ball
2. Empty the ball out on to clean work surface. Knead the dough on clean surface for about 10 minutes or until it is smooth. Form dough into a ball, then place in a plastic bag with a little oil. Let sit for 30 minutes.
3. For the stuffing, peel the potatoes and dice them into ¼ inch cubes. Heat 4 tablespoons oil in a large frying pan over a medium heat. Add onion and sauté until brown. Add the peas, ginger, and chili. Cover and let cook over low heat, stirring occasionally.
4. Add the diced potatoes, salt, coriander seeds, cumin, cayenne, and lime juice. Cook on low heat for 3-4 minutes. Turn off the heat and allow the mixture to cool.
5. Knead the pastry dough again and divide it into eight balls. Keep 7 covered while you work with one
6. Roll each ball into a 7 inch circle. Cut them in half and use each semi-circle to form a cone. Fill the cone with about 2 spoons of the potato mixture, then close the triangle with a little water, then press around the edges with a fork to seal.
7. Heat about 2 inches of oil in a pan for deep frying. Fry each samosa until golden brown.

Vitumbua

Ingredients

- 3 cups rice flour
- ¼ cup white flour
- ¼ grated coconut
- 1.5 cups thin coconut milk and 1 cup concentrated coconut milk
- 1 tsp. yeast
- 1 cup sugar
- ½ tsp ground cardamom
- 3 cups oil

Method

1. Mix rice flour, grated coconut, and enough thin coconut milk to form dough. Knead for 10 minutes.
2. Add yeast, sugar, cardamom, and the thin coconut milk. Mix well to form a smooth batter.
3. Let batter rise for one hour
4. Each ball should be about ¼ cup of the batter. Deep fry until golden brown (about 3 minutes per side).

Soups

Supu ya Viazi (Sweet Potato Soup)

Ingredients

- 1 kg sweet potatoes
- 4cups chicken broth/stock
- 3 Tbsp. tomato paste
- 1/2 tsp. curry powder
- Salt and pepper to taste

Method

1. Peel potatoes, boil in chicken stock until soft.
2. Mash potatoes until smooth, or put them in blender with chicken stock.
3. Add tomato paste, curry powder, salt, and pepper.
4. Simmer until soup thickens a little. If soup gets too thick, it can be thinned out with a little coconut milk or more chicken stock.
5. Add more salt and pepper to taste

Breads

Chapati (made with oil)

Ingredients

- 2 cups flour
- 1 tsp. salt

- A few tablespoons warm water
- About ½ cup oil

Method

1. Mix salt and flour
2. Slowly add warm water until a very thick dough forms
3. Add 1 Tbsp oil
4. Knead dough for a few minutes, adding a little flour as you go
5. Let sit in a bowl for about 30 minutes
6. Grease frying pan with a little oil
7. Divide dough into balls and flatten into circles about 6-7 inches in diameter
8. Fry each chapati individually until golden brown on both sides

Chapati (made with ghee)

Ingredients

- 2 cups flour
- 1 tsp. salt
- 1/2 cup water
- About 1/3 cup ghee

Method

1. Mix flour and salt in bowl
2. Add one spoon of ghee along with enough water to make a thick dough
3. Knead for 5-10 minutes
4. Roll dough into long rope, then take small portions of rope and roll into a spiral and a small spoon of ghee on each side. Let the spirals rest for about 20-30 minutes, then roll into 6 inch circles
5. In hot pan with a little bit of ghee, fry chapatis until golden brown on each side.

Chila (Rice Bread)

Ingredients

- 6 cups rice
- 6 cups coconut milk
- 1 cup sugar
- 1 Tbsp. yeast
- 1-2 tsp. ground cardamom

Method

1. Soak rice for about 1-2 hours
2. Drain rice, put all ingredients in a blender; blend until smooth and there are no large pieces of rice in the batter
3. Transfer batter to a large bowl and let sit, covered, for about 1 hour
4. Heat a 6-7 inch diameter frying pan over medium/high heat
5. Add enough batter to cover the bottom of the pan to make about ½ inch thick pancakes
6. Cook until dry on top.

*Note: When stacking chila one on top of the other, make sure the tops are facing each other so they don't stick together

Mkate wa Ufuta

Ingredients

- 4.5 cups flour
- 1/2 tsp. salt; 2 Tbsp. salt
- 4 tsp. yeast
- 2 cups coconut milk
- 1 egg
- 1 cup water
- 1/4 cup oil
- 1/4 cup sesame seeds

Method

1. Mix flour, yeast, and ½ tsp. salt in bowl
2. Add coconut milk little by little, and once it has all come together, add the egg
3. Knead dough for about 3-5 minutes (dough should be thick and stretchy)
4. Let dough rest in a cool, dry place about one hour, until bubbles appear on surface.
5. Use frying pan (about 7-8 inches in diameter) – heat pan over coals a few minutes
6. In another bowl, mix water and 2 Tbsp. salt. Sprinkle some of this mixture into pan so that there is a thin, white film
7. Remove pan from coals, spread enough dough in pan so that it covers bottom and is about ½ inch thick.
8. Brush salt water over dough, then sprinkle some sesame seeds over top
9. Put pan on heat for about 1 minute so the bottom cooks slightly
10. Turn pan upside down and hold about 5 inches from heat until top is slightly browned

Mkate wa Mayai (Egg Cake)

Ingredients

- 10 eggs
- 1 cup sugar
- 2 cups flour
- 1-2 tsp. ground cardamom (or vanilla)

Method

1. Sift flour
2. In large bowl, combine eggs and sugar. Blend with a hand-held beater until the mixture has nearly quadrupled in volume (about 20-25 minutes)
3. Add cardamom (or vanilla)
4. Add flour to the egg mixture, little by little, until thoroughly combined
5. Transfer batter into a cake pan with tall sides
6. Bake in a 350 degree (f) oven for 15-20 minutes, or until golden brown on top and a toothpick comes out clean when inserted.

Mkate ya Maji

Ingredients

- About 1 cup flour
- 4 eggs
- 2 cups water
- Pinch of salt
- About ¼ cup ghee
- One onion, finely chopped

Method

1. Mix water, flour, eggs, salt, and ghee
2. Strain mixture (batter should be thin)
3. In a warmed pan with a little oil, sauté onions until light brown
4. Spoon mixture so a thin layer covers the bottom of the pan
5. Cook until lightly browned on both sides

Dessert

Kaimati

Ingredients

- 1 tsp. yeast
- 2 cups flour
- 1.5 cups milk (or coconut milk)
- 2 tablespoon melted butter
- 1.5 cups of water
- 1 cup sugar
- 1 tsp. ground cardamom
- Oil for deep frying

Method

1. Put yeast in a little warm water until dissolved
2. Sift flour. Add milk, little by little, until combined
3. Add butter and yeast. Mix with a wooden spoon until batter is smooth
4. Let batter rise for about 1 hour
5. While batter is rising, combine sugar, water, and cardamom in a saucepan. Cook over low heat until sugar has dissolved and mixture has thickened slightly. Let cool.
6. Take about 1 Tbsp of the batter and deep fry until golden brown. Remove from oil and dip in syrup mixture.

Mkate wa Mchele (Rice Cake)

Ingredients

- 4 cups rice
- 4 cups coconut milk
- 1 Tbsp. yeast

- 2/3 cup sugar
- 1 to 2 tsp. cardamom

Method

1. Soak rice in water for 1-2 hours
2. Drain rice and put all ingredients in a blender; blend until smooth (there should be no big chunks of rice)
3. Put batter into a bowl and let sit for about 1 hour
4. Once the batter has risen, transfer to a lightly greased and floured cake pan with tall sides
5. Bake either over a charcoal stove or in an oven at 375 degrees (f) until the top is golden brown and a toothpick comes about clean (about 20 minutes)

Ndizi ko Kastad (Banana Custard)

Ingredients

- 3 cups prepared instant custard
- 6-7 small bananas
- 1 tsp. cinnamon
- 1/2 tsp. ground cloves
- 1/4 tsp. ground nutmeg
- 1/2 cup sugar
- 1/4 cup chopped peanuts

Method

1. Mix nuts and spices with prepared custard
2. Chop bananas and add to mixture
3. Serve chilled

Ndizi Mbivu (Sweet Plantains in Coconut Milk)

Ingredients

- 3 plantains
- 2 cups coconut milk
- 1 tsp. cardamom
- 1/4 cup sugar

Method

1. Peel plantains, slice down middle

2. Place peels, with outside facing down, in a baking dish. Place plantains on top of peels so they aren't touching the bottom of the dish.
3. Grind cardamom with mortar and pestle and sprinkle over plantains
4. Mix sugar with coconut milk and add to plantains
5. Bake in 375 degree (f) oven for about 25-30 minutes. Can be served warm or cold.

Vileja

Ingredients

- 1 1/2 cups sugar
- 2/3 cup butter
- 2 eggs and 1 egg white
- 2 Tbsp. milk
- 1 tsp. vanilla extract
- 3 1/4 cups flour
- 2 .5 tsp baking powder
- 1/2 tsp. salt
- 1/2 tsp. ground cardamom
- Dates or cashews for adding to the top of the cookies

Method

1. Combine butter and sugar until smooth
2. Add eggs, milk, and vanilla to butter mixture
3. Combine flour, baking powder, cardamom, and salt in a separate bowl. Slowly add the dry ingredients to the wet ingredients until combined
4. Put dough in refrigerator for about 1 hour
5. Roll out dough into 3/4 inch thick sheet. Cut small circles and place on baking sheet.
6. Brush the tops of the cookies with egg white and add dates or cashews on top for decoration
7. Bake until golden brown

Visheti (Doughnuts)

Ingredients

- 2 cups all-purpose flour, sifted before measuring
- 1/2 teaspoon baking soda
- 1/8 teaspoon nutmeg
- 1/4 teaspoon salt

- 4 Tbsp butter
- 1/2 cup sugar
- 1/2 teaspoon vanilla
- 1 egg
- 1/2 cup milk
- 1/2 cup powdered sugar
- Oil for deep frying

Method

1. Sift together flour, nutmeg, salt, and baking powder
2. Put flour on counter and make a well in the middle
3. In separate bowl, mix butter and sugar together until combined
4. Add milk, vanilla, egg, and butter/sugar mixture to the well and combine with hands until the dough comes together
5. Roll dough into a log, then cut into 1/2 inch thick circles
6. Deep fry each circle until golden brown
7. As soon as the visheti come out of the oil, roll them in powdered sugar

Sauces

Coconut Chutney

Ingredients

- Meat of 1 coconut, shredded
- About 1/3 cup plain yogurt
- Juice of 3 limes
- 1/2 tsp. cumin
- 1/2 to 1 tsp chili pepper, finely chopped
- Salt to taste

Method

1. Combine coconut, cumin, chili, and salt in a bowl

2. Add yogurt and lime juice until sauce reaches desired consistency (shouldn't be too thin).

Kuchumbaki ya Embe (Mango Chutney)

Ingredients

- 2 cups chopped red onion
- 1/2 chili pepper, finely chopped
- 2 tomatoes, chopped
- 1/2 tsp. red vinegar
- 2 Tbsp. (or more, to taste) honey *or* brown sugar
- 2 Tbsp. olive oil
- 2 ripe mangoes, chopped

Method

1. In a saucepan, add onion, vinegar, sugar/honey, olive oil. Simmer on low/medium heat for about 15 minutes.
2. Add chili pepper, tomatoes, and curry powder. Simmer until mixture becomes thick and syrupy (about 20 minutes).
3. Remove from heat, add chopped mangoes. Let mixture cool completely.

Drinks

Chai (Tea)

Ingredients

- 1/2 cinnamon stick
- 1 small bunch lemongrass
- 2 tsp. mashed ginger
- 2 Tbsp. black tea leaves
- 10 cups water

Method

1. Boil water with cinnamon, lemongrass, and ginger for ten minutes
2. Turn heat off and add tea leaves. Let steep for 3-5 minutes. Strain into teapot.
*Note: There are many variations of this tea, some using just lemongrass or just ginger. Also, some people like to add a little black pepper.

Miscellaneous

Tui (Coconut Milk)

1. Drain coconuts, remove meat with *mbuzi* (coconut grater)
2. Mix coconut meat with equal parts warm water, let stand a few minutes
3. Squeeze coconut meat with hands to separate liquid from coconut
4. Repeat the process one more time (add more water to coconut meat).

*Sometimes people like to keep the first batch of milk separate from the second, as it will be richer and more concentrated.

Uji (Porridge)

Ingredients

- 1.5 cups maize flour
- About 1 cup coconut milk
- 3 Tbsp. sugar
- 1/2 tsp. mashed ginger

Method

1. Put maize flour and enough coconut milk to cover it in a saucepan.
2. Cook over medium heat for about 5 minutes, then add sugar and ginger
3. Continue cooking until it reaches a thick and porridge-like consistency. Serve hot.

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