

Jamaican cooks whet U.S. tastes

By ETHEL SIMMONS
Jamaican gourmet cook Doreen Kirkcaldy scooped pepperpot soup from cans into a cooking pot. Her assistant, Herma Aris, meanwhile was mashing bananas in preparation for banana fritters.

Both would soon serve samples of these dishes to customers in the Creative Kitchen area of Hudson's North End which welcomed the demonstrators as part of a recent store promotion.

Beautiful color postcards, compliments of the Jamaica Tourist Board, were spread out on a table to be plucked by hungry shoppers.

Recipes pictured Pepperpot Soup, Escovitch Fish, Curry Goat, Cornmeal Pone, Rice and Peas, and Beef Patties, in tropical table settings.

MRS. KIRKCALDY explained: "Pepperpot soup is a simple one-pot meal that we love more than anything else it's made from Jamaican callaloo."

"If you come to Jamaica it's available," she said. "It's similar to spinach. You add spinners, which are similar to dumplings (rolled). You must have fresh or salted meat. In Jamaica we use pickled pig's tail."

Other Jamaican one-pot soups in-

clude pumpkin, congo pea called gungo, red pea, rich vegetable with spinners, and escovitch fish which is traditional.

AS A CHILD, Doreen Kirkcaldy brewed especially flavorful folk remedies. She majored in foods and nutrition in college and later worked for the Jamaican government.

She created the government-sponsored Culinary Arts Festival Competition, an annual Independence Festival event to develop Jamaican cuisine.

Today, Mrs. Kirkcaldy works with Grace Kennedy & Co. Ltd., manufacturers of precooked foods.

The famed pepperpot soup Mrs. Kirkcaldy served was delicious and zesty. But it's not available in the U.S. You can make your own pepperpot soup by following the postcard recipe



Doreen Kirkcaldy (right) and Herma Aris stir up Jamaican specialties



Pepperpot soup

PEPPERPOT SOUP

Wash and chop 1/2 lb. callaloo (spinach), 1/2 lb. Indian Kale, 1 doz. okras almost to a puree.

Put to boil with 1/2 lb. each salt beef, pig's tail, fresh beef. Simmer until meats are tender.

Add 3 cups coconut milk (make by adding water to 1 grated coconut, then pass through sieve), 1/2 lb. each peeled yam, coco, then 2 crushed callaloo, 1 sliced hot pepper, salt and pepper to taste.

Simmer for further 1/2 hour

"WE CANNOT really boast of what you would call a haute cuisine," Mrs. Kirkcaldy said. "But when Jamaica became independent in 1962 there was a place for cultrian arts."

European-trained hotel chefs gave ideas to amateurs in the Culinary Arts Festival Competition.

"Each year seems to exceed other years," she said.

Influences from English, Spanish African and ethnic groups such as Chinese, Indian and Syrian are evident in Jamaican cuisine.

"From the Spanish we have developed a taste for highly seasoned

foods," Mrs. Kirkcaldy said. "For visitors we tone down on spices."

SHE CONTINUED, "Indians have given us this great urge to curries and chutneys."

The other tasty dish featured at the cooking demonstration, Banana Fritters, like a pancake, Mrs. Kirkcaldy said, is made as follows:

BANANA FRITTERS

Fully ripe bananas
1 egg
3 to 4 T flour
3 or more T. sugar
1 t. cinnamon or vanilla flavoring
1/2 t. baking powder

1 t. nutmeg
1 T raisins (optional)
1/2 cup oil.

Mash banana to a pulp. Beat egg and sugar together. Add banana, flour and baking powder. Mix well. Heat oil in frying pan. Use one tablespoon to drop mixture into hot oil. Fry on one side until golden brown. Fry on other side.

Drain and dredge with sugar.

"You can make an orange sauce, or any favorite fruit flavor," Mrs. Kirkcaldy pointed out. "The beauty is the banana fritter can be eaten hot or cold."

Cuisine and Duglass

Fleur de Lys finds happiness with salad

The rain was coming down with a generous patter on the slate roof before it settled on the moist, furnished sun-bleached earth of Serville, Ottawa, on a day in August around the turn of the century.

In a village, not far from the city, where the main source of survival is farming, lived a little girl who was nicknamed "Chubby Chubby" by her friends and "Fleur de Lys" by her family. She could often be found on a rainy day, after all the farm chores had been completed, gazing out her window clear, dreaming of the days when she would become a woman, like all little girls do when trotting in high heeled shoes, scuffed and torn.

It was in January, around the 25th, when Fleur first set foot on American soil, just to spend a weekend with some relatives. Little did she know that she would find her beau come true start a family of four and grow into happiness, all within a year.

It wasn't easy at first for the country girl, who looked like a jelly roll powdered to the hilt with sugar.

WHEN SHE walked across the dance floor every Saturday night, Fleur shook like a bowl of jelly. She had a beautiful name but was frankly bored with lonely nights standing against the walls of Detroit's Arcadia dance hall, waiting, hoping that tall, handsome guy with the olive complexion would ask her to dance.

She would ask herself, does everyone have to be slim, blond and beautiful? Where is the all-American mother and child, good-food-and-home way of life? How much loneliness and constant harassment about her obesity from the boys on the block, who pegged her "Tub of Lard," can anyone take?

After all, being raised on a farm and eating Ode de Porc Saute aux Poire Grilled Beefsteak au Beurre Fondue Bourdin (blood sausage) and lots of homemade Gramina Jolley bread just for breakfast alone day after day makes losing weight no easy task.



By DUGLASS DUGLASS

No one would ask the shy 185-pound five-foot-two blond to dance, and it was just as well, for Alice, who changed her name from Fleur de Lys, couldn't speak a word of English. It wasn't until a few months passed into the birth of spring, that she came to realize she was a lover of blubber and hated herself for it.

Alice joined the chic American diet set and, let me tell you, on her wedding day she could very easily have been taken for Jean Harlow. Nothing has permanence, and so went the waist line after fending for her children.

EVER SINCE I can remember, the "diet" has lived in our household, embedded in our minds from the memorable sound of pounding (excessive weight being shifted from side to side in a callisthenics form) from the floor above. It was a constant reminder to all of us kids that people prefer to suffer for appearance's sake.

Is there more than just hard work and eating tossed salads? Alice would say as we were rocked to sleep in the warmth of the summer sun with the sounds of salads all about. There were salads served at least once a day, with colorful, jello and cream called confetti.

Salads served with pears and cheese.

Salads served with avocado and grapefruit with hot roquefort dressing.

Salads served with hot spinach may-

onnaise, onions, crisp bacon and fresh spinach.

Salads served like in the time of Caesar

And cottage cheese with a bouquet of fresh fragrant fruit from islands of afar, and dressing made of honey sweet, aging in a jar, but this is one she missed.

Fleur de Lys is my mother and it is for her, along with all others, that I present and honor this salad of salads.

LA FLEUR DE LYS SALADE

1 cup your favorite thousand island dressing
1/2 cup chef's dressing
2 lbs. sour cream
Salt and pepper to your taste
One heart of palm (about 30 cents a can)
1 head of iceberg (head) lettuce, loose, not tight
1 lb. King crab meat (frozen and defrosted)
10 T-18 oz. dry shrimp (anyway available, usually at gourmet specialty shops)

METHOD

Remove the heart from the lettuce simply by holding the opposite end like a bowling ball and then banging it against a hard surface using a claw-like grip. With the other hand grab the heart, turn one-half degree and pull it out.

Run cold water gently down the cavity of the lettuce. The other leaves will fall off. Save the ones that form a perfect cup or bowl-like shape. This we will use for the actual service of the salads.

Cut the remainder of the lettuce in bite-size pieces. You may use a French knife without any worry about bruising the lettuce. No matter what, you are bruising the fibers whether a knife or your hands are the instruments.

Immediately submerge the lettuce in cold water. This method will prevent the damaged greens from continuing to bleed.

Strain the thousand island dressing. Then whip in the chef's dressing. Season to taste. In a large tossing bowl add the drained iceberg lettuce. Lettuce must be free from any excess water. Drain in a towel, then add half the dressing, the seafood. A little fresh chopped parsley would be great for color.

Toss with your hands, or if that hits you the wrong way, use whatever you

wish. This should be enough for a setting of four at luncheon and a great appetizer for a dinner of six.

Set lettuce cups on a glass cup or dish. Then divide salad into the proportions. Add sliced Brazilian hearts of palm on top.

There is very little vinegar in this dressing so a dry white wine or champagne may be served.

CHEF'S DRESSING

2 parts oil
1 part vinegar
Salt and pepper
Pressed fresh garlic (lightly)
Some Grey Poupon mustard
Pinch of sugar to cut the vinegar taste
1 egg

Add egg and vinegar in a blender. Whip for a minute. Then add all other ingredients and whip for a minute or two.



La Fleur de Lys salade is named for my mother.