Black-eyed pea fritters & corn porridge

About
In Nigeria, ogi (corn porridge) is traditionally served with akara (black-eyed pea fritters). Different versions of the fritters can be found throughout central and western Africa. This food traveled to the New World during the slave trade and is still eaten today in the Caribbean and in South America. The Brazilian name for these fritters is acarajé.

These fritters resemble a popular street food from the Middle East called felafel, deep fried balls of garbanzo beans (chickpeas) or fava beans. Like felafel, akara is also delicious stuffed into a pita bread and served with lettuce and tomato.

The corn and the beans combine to form a complete, vegetarian protein.

Ingredients

For the fritters
- 1 1/2 cups dried black-eyed peas
- 1 onion, peeled and chopped
- 1 1/4 tsp salt
- Freshly ground black pepper
- 1/4 to 1/2 tsp cayenne

For the porridge
- 2 cups fresh corn, off the cob
- Water
- Honey to sweeten

Directions

For the fritters
Wash the black-eyed peas and cover in excess water. Soak for 16 hours, changing the water if it is a very hot day. Drain the peas and cover with fresh water. Rub the peas between your palms. Many of the skins will loosen and float in the water. Skim off the free skins with a sieve or slotted spoon; leave the stubborn skins alone.

Drain the peas well and put them in the container of a food processor. Add onions, salt pepper, and cayenne. Process on medium speed, pushing contents down with a rubber spatula until you have a grainy paste. Slowly add about 5 tablespoons of hot water, while processing, until the paste has a droppable consistency. It should look light and airy but remain slightly grainy.

Heat an inch of oil in a frying pan over medium heat. Allow it to get very hot. Now work fast: stir the batter and remove a heaped teaspoon. Using a second teaspoon, drop the batter into the oil. Repeat until frying pan is full. Fry the fritters for about 1 minute at medium heat, turning them over as they darken, and then lower the heat. Fry for another 6 minutes or so, turning the fritters as needed. Remove them with a slotted spoon and drain on paper towels.
For corn porridge
Cover the corn with water. Allow to sit for 3–5 days, changing water daily. At the end of 3–5 days, drain the water.

Grind the corn in a blender or with a metate and mano. Add the corn mash as needed to boiling water to make porridge. Sweeten to taste with honey or sugar.

Reference