



Let's Learn About Corn Spoonbread!

Educators, please review this insightful background info on Corn Spoonbread and Kwanzaa and share with your students in an age-appropriate way before eating the snack. Use the guiding questions to inspire discussion while your students enjoy the snack.

This delicious recipe and the information on the following pages about the history of Kwanzaa and Corn Spoonbread was shared with us by Mystery Furtado, the founder of Type Diabeat-it, a London-based non-profit organization which is focused on educating and supporting Canadians and Belizeans living with diabetes.



Type Diabeat-it offers a variety of free cooking and food literacy programs across the city for children, youth and seniors. Their recent Afro-Heritage Food Literacy Program allows children to explore the diverse tastes and culinary traditions of the African diaspora. Another program, Flavours of Empowerment, teaches budget-conscious recipes, diabetic-friendly dishes, and utilizes ingredients common in the BIPOC (Black, Indigenous and People of Colour) Community. Programs are tailored to the demographic and ages they are working with, and they even offer workshops open to the public!

They recently have started London's first Black Community Garden, called Harvest Haven, and a new Community Kitchen, and plan to scale up their Afro-centric food box program as a result, which currently accompanies a training program to teach participants how to cook culturally-relevant African and Latin inspired recipes for diabetes.

For today's snack that you'll be enjoying, Mystery showed our Growing Chefs! Ontario team how to make her very own Corn Spoonbread, based off of a recipe she remembers her grandmother making when she was a child. Mystery recalls the unique way her grandmother cooked, not from a recipe, but straight from her memory. Her grandmother would make this recipe on the stovetop, and she can still remember the wonderful smell of it cooking that filled the kitchen, especially around the holidays.

More information on the inspiring work Type Diabeat-it does and how to get involved can be found at diabeat-it.ca, facebook.com/typediabeatit and instagram.com/typediabeatit



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Background

Kwanzaa is a week-long celebration honoring African heritage and culture. It's observed mainly by African Americans, starting on December 26th and lasting until January 1st. Created by Maulana Karenga in 1966, Kwanzaa focuses on seven principles including unity, self-determination, and collective work.

We choose to focus on one popular grain this Kwanzaa, corn. Corn was, and is, a significant staple in Africa due to its adaptability to various climates and its nutritional value. Its versatility makes it a vital part of many African diets. African slaves brought their culinary traditions to the Americas, showcasing resilience and survival. Their traditions changed over time due to their interactions with Indigenous peoples, European traditions, locally-available ingredients and many other circumstances.

Corn spoonbread symbolizes this journey, representing the perseverance and sacrifice of African ancestors, and the adaptations that were made when they came to the Americas. Cooked on stovetops and served with wooden ladles, corn spoonbread serves as a tangible link to cultural heritage, highlighting the interconnectedness of food and identity across generations and continents.

Principles of Kwanzaa:

The seven principles of Kwanzaa, known as the Nguzo Saba (n-GU-zo SAH-bah) in Swahili, are:

1. *Umoja (oo-MO-jah) - Unity*: Emphasizes the importance of togetherness among family, community, and people of African descent.
2. *Kujichagulia (koo-jee-chah-GOO-lee-ah) - Self-Determination*: Encourages defining oneself, speaking for oneself, and creating one's future based on African culture and history.
3. *Ujima (oo-JEE-mah) - Collective Work and Responsibility*: Stresses the idea of working together to solve problems within the community and building it up together.
4. *Ujamaa (oo-jah-MAH-ah) - Cooperative Economics*: Highlights supporting and building businesses that benefit the community and promote economic unity.
5. *Nia (NEE-ah) - Purpose*: Encourages people to strive for collective goals that benefit the community, restoring African people to their traditional greatness.
6. *Kuumba (koo-OOM-bah) - Creativity*: Emphasizes the importance of creativity in building and maintaining a strong and vibrant community.
7. *Imani (ee-MAH-nee) - Faith*: Focuses on believing in the people, parents, leaders, and the righteousness of the struggle for a better world.

These principles guide the week-long celebration of Kwanzaa and are often reflected upon and practiced throughout the year within the African American community.



Individual Corn Spoonbread

INGREDIENTS

- Coconut spray with flour
- 3/4 cup yellow cornmeal
- 1/2 cup all-purpose flour
- 3 large eggs, separated
- 1 teaspoon kosher salt
- 1/4 teaspoon baking powder
- One 14.75-ounce can creamed corn
- 2 whole scallions, white and green parts, chopped
- 1 small chipotle in adobo, finely chopped

DIRECTIONS

1. Preheat the oven to 325°F. Coat each cup of a 12-cup muffin pan with baking spray.
2. Whisk together the cornmeal, flour, salt and baking powder in a small bowl. Whisk together the creamed corn and egg yolks in a large bowl. Stir in the cornmeal mixture, scallions and chipotle. Whip the egg whites in another large bowl until stiff peaks form. Stir about one-third of the egg whites into the corn mixture to lighten it and then fold in the remaining egg whites until no streaks of white remain.
3. Spoon the batter into the muffin cups (they will be very full) and bake until puffed and golden, 20 to 25 minutes. Cool the spoonbreads for 5 minutes in the pans. Run a thin spatula around the edges of each to loosen and then remove the breads from the pans. Serve warm or at room temperature.



Guiding Questions

Junior/Intermediate/Senior:

1. Have you tasted cornbread before? How was it similar/different?
2. Have you tasted any other foods that originate from **African** cultures? Discuss the flavours and the ingredients.
 - Examples: jollof rice, injera (ethiopian flatbread), couscous, piri piri chicken
3. Have you tasted any foods that originate from **African American** cultures? Discuss the flavours and the ingredients.
 - Examples: jambalaya, gumbo, candied yams, collard greens, sweet potato pie
4. Discuss why every Kwanzaa celebration may have different recipes served. It's important for students to understand that there isn't one African culture, there are over 50 countries in Africa each with distinct cultures and food traditions even within one country. When the African Diaspora came to the Americas, food traditions were even further adapted to integrate locally available ingredients and circumstances.

FDK/Primary:

Sensory exploration encourages the use of descriptive language instead of just saying "yum" or "yuck".

1. What are our five senses? How does it smell? Look? Feel? Taste? Sound when you take a bite?
2. Is anyone nervous to try new foods? Explain that's okay. Why is it good to try new foods? Discuss the benefits.
3. Are there any special foods your family makes for holidays? Would you like to learn how to make them?