

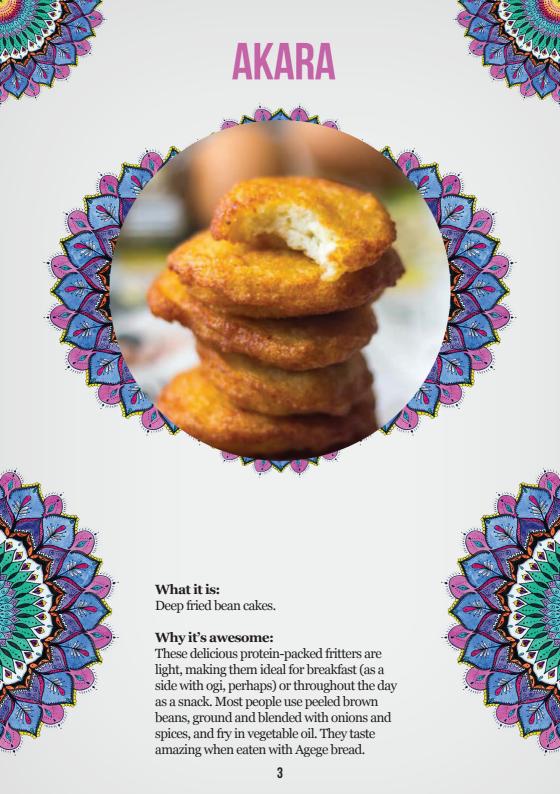




Not whatever the hell Jamie Oliver said it was. Jollof's base ingredient is always rice, and "TPO" (tomato, pepper and onion) plus scotch bonnets. It's customisable according to your preference: make it hotter than the sun, or as mild as a European's palette (jk, but not really). Add mixed vegetables if you want (please don't). Best enjoyed with piping hot dodo (see below) and a cold Supermalt.

Why it's awesome:

It's pure, flavourful carbs, and tastes like God's love. What's not awesome about that?









A pottage made of beans and plantains,

Why it's awesome:

Nigerians love a pottage, and they are most commonly made with yams (Nigeria is one of the top producers of yam in the world). This variation balances the nuttiness of brown beans with the natural sweetness of plantains, and the palm oil adds a rich smoky taste to it.





Skewers of intricately spiced cuts of meat, grilled to perfection over an open flame. Often served with sharp, raw chopped onions, and wrapped in newspaper.

Why it's awesome:

Suya is widely considered to be a specialty of the Hausa people of northern Nigeria and Niger. The key to excellent suya is the spice mix (yaji) it is steeped in before grilling, and the Mallams will never share their recipes. The joy of suya is finding the best spots in your state.





The roselle plant is a hibiscus plant that is native to parts of west Africa, and the flowers are what's used to make this refreshing drink.

Why it's awesome:

It's tangy and sweet and inherently customisable — you can add fruits of your choice, like a non-alcoholic Pimm's: cloves, sparkling water or lemonade, and even chilli. On a hot day, there's nothing like a tall glass of zobo.



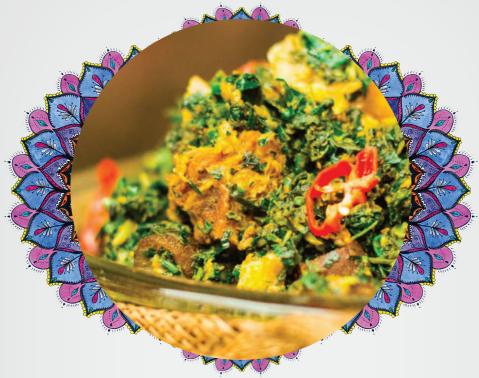


A (vegan!) dish made of peeled Nigerian brown beans ground together with onions, bell pepper, palm oil and spices, and steamed in banana leaves (or other vessels). You can add any combination of extra bits to it: flaked fish, slices of hard boiled eggs, ground beef... it's literally up to you.

Why it's awesome:

It's delicious and nutty, and is great as a side (try it with any rice dish) or part of a main dish with, for example, soaked garri (fermented cassava).





Essentially, a "dry" leafy vegetable soup from the Cross River region of Nigeria. The (iron-rich) greens are a mixture of ugwu (a fluted pumpkin leaf) and gbure (waterleaf). In places where these leaves are unavailable, people substitute spinach. People also use a mix of meats and fish, and for authenticity, periwinkles.

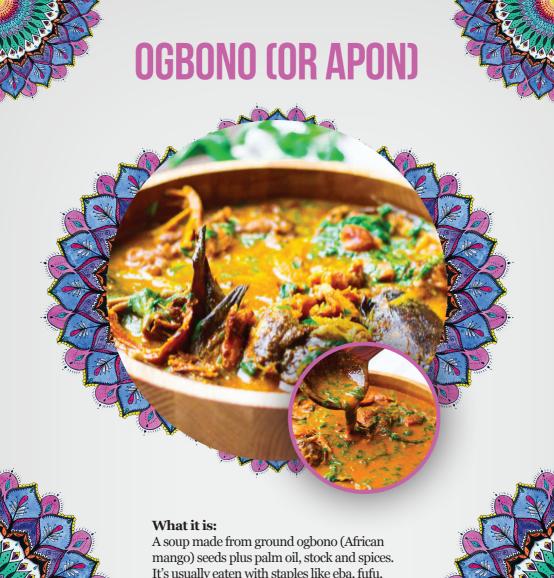
Why it's awesome:

Served hot, with pounded yam or fufu, it's a party in your mouth. Top tip: get a friend from Calabar to cook it for you - there's nothing like it.



peel, chop and fry. Crack open a Supermalt

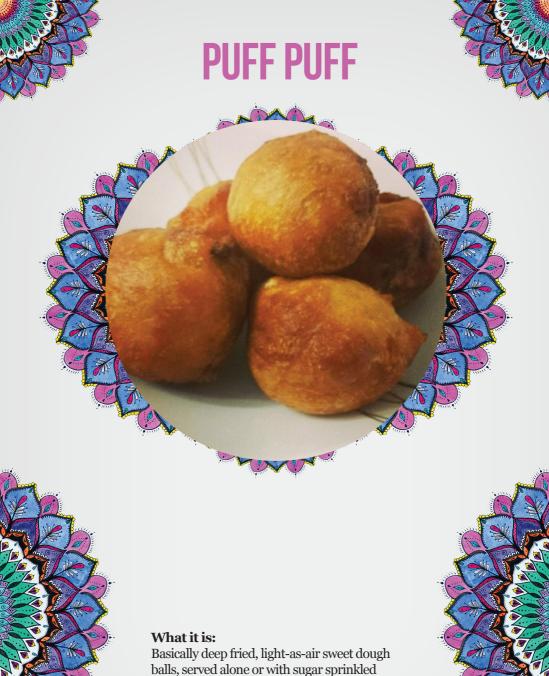
and eat it on the veranda.



It's usually eaten with staples like eba, fufu, pounded yam or amala.

Why it's awesome:

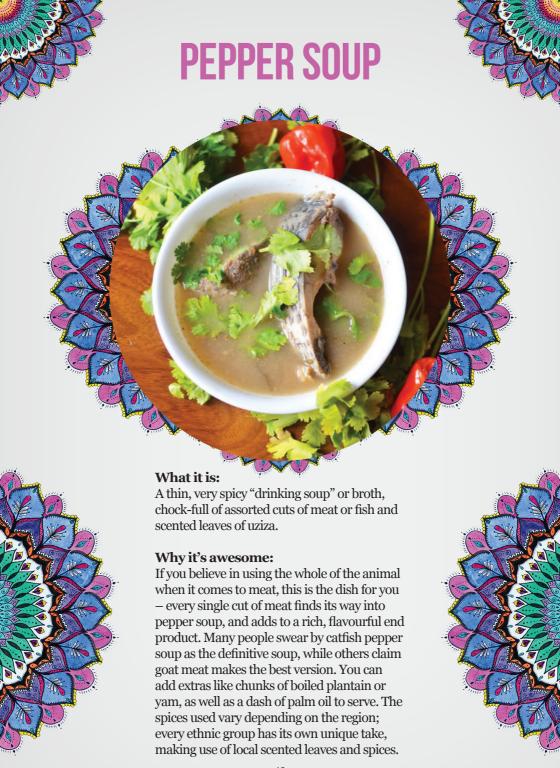
It has "draw", that wonderful slippery texture that helps the fufu go down easier. There are many variations on it, too: cooked alone, with vegetables, with or without meat or fish, with okra, or even with added melon seeds (egusi). It's super-quick to cook, and a perfect introduction to the many soups of Nigerian cuisine.



balls, served alone or with sugar sprinkled over them.

Why it's awesome:

See above, please. They are the perfect party food.







Crunchy cubes or strips of sweet, deep fried pastry.

Why it's awesome:

It's basically fried butter and sugar, and it's dangerously moreish. Perfect for snacking, and if you're looking to keep small hands busy with a rainy day activity, it's foolproof.



A palm fruit-based soup that is most commonly associated with the Delta region, and particularly the Urhobo ethnic group. There are variations across the country – and indeed west Africa and beyond – but they all include regional spices and all elevate fresh ingredients (fish and seafood, assorted meats, the palm fruit itself) above all things.

Why it's awesome:

It tastes like no other Nigerian soup. The palm fruit, shellfish and meat create delicious textures and an explosion of taste, and while it goes with anything, I strongly urge you to have it with "starch" or eba.







Slices of yam, dipped in a light akara mix, or a plantain batter, and then deep fried.

Why it's awesome:

It's carb-tacular goodness. Akara, boli (roasted plantains) and dundun (deep-fried yams) are classic (and delicious) street foods, but a combination of all three? Why not, yes please. Serve with chilli sauce, or a quick pepper stew.





A literal translation from the Yoruba is "mixed greens" and while they are the star of this rich, fragrant vegetable stew, there's so much goodness besides: blended scotch bonnets, bell pepper, onions and locust beans. This is a classic Yoruba dish.

Why it's awesome:

It goes with everything. Purists insist authentic efo riro must have efinrin (African spinach) and efo soko (Lagos spinach). Others say tomatoes are banned (to prevent sogginess). Some insist on palm oil over vegetable oil. All agree it's freakin' delicious.





Deshelled African land snails, usually cooked in an onion and pepper sauce.

Why it's awesome:

The taste and texture of African land snails is hard to describe to the uninitiated, but a good number of people think it is just excellent. They are a popular party snack, skewered on little toothpicks.



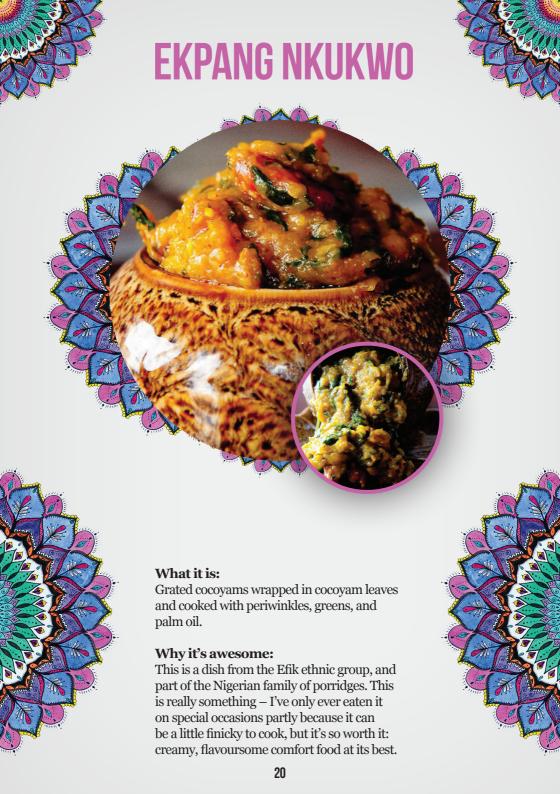


Mixed okra/okro soup. To be eaten with solid staples like pounded yam, amala, eba, fufu of all types.

Why it's awesome:

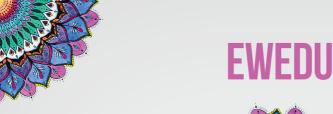
Okra's viscid quality ("draw") is a love-hate thing (but if you hate it your opinion is wrong) and this showcases it perfectly. This is an often piquant one-pot edition of two separate meal components (the okra, and the stew) and bolstered with lots of assorted cuts of meat and/or seafood. Make no mistake: It is a rich stew, and consumption is best followed by a nap.













The leaves of the jute plant, cooked and blended.

Why it's awesome:

Like okra, it's mucilaginous when cooked, making it ideal as an accompaniment to the starchy staples like amala and fufu. The slight bitterness of the leaves makes for a harmonious blend with many tomato-and-pepper-based stews as an alternative to ila or apon, and there are so many ways to customise it to personal taste. Don't forget to add kaun (potash) to help soften the leaves and thicken before blending.





A leafy vegetable stew from the Efik people, cooked in palm oil with stock, cuts of meat and seafood.

Why it's awesome:

Afang is a rich (in nutrients and flavours) stew, and gets its name from the leaves used. You must use afang or okazi for it to qualify as afang stew. Afang leaves are more bitter and a little tougher than the waterleaves that are also a component of this dish, and when blended (or chopped finely) create a lovely texture and taste. It goes great with usi (cassava starch), pounded yam or eba.