

Cooking with water: Telling WaterAid's story through food

Use these traditional recipes from Burkina Faso at your harvest supper.



Sitting down to share a meal is a journey far beyond just the food on your plate. It is a way for you and your congregation to come together with the communities WaterAid works with, to celebrate good food and become part of something bigger.

At WaterAid we know that how a community uses water around mealtimes – for drinking, washing and cooking – is crucial to their health and wellbeing.

That's why this harvest we are bringing people together to think about how we all use water in preparing and cooking meals. We hope these recipes can start discussions amongst your group on just how important clean water is for so many of the things we do on a daily basis.

Groundnut and sweet potato soup

Ingredients (serves 4)

- Cooking oil
- 1 large sweet potato
- 1 onion
- 3 garlic cloves
- 1 red chilli
- 1 tbsp. crunchy peanut butter
- 4 tomatoes
- 1 tin coconut milk
- 250ml water
- handful of spinach
- coriander and chopped peanuts.

Groundnuts (or peanuts) are a key component of Burkinabe agriculture yet their production is being heavily impacted by flood and drought.

Heat the oil in a large pot over medium heat and add the chopped onion, garlic, and chilli. Fry until soft and then add chopped sweet potatoes and stir together.

Add chopped tomatoes, coconut milk, water, and peanut butter. Simmer for 25 minutes until the sweet potatoes are tender and finally add the spinach.

Garnish with extra chopped peanuts and a little coriander.

Maize bread

This recipe combines the staple maize crop with fermented cow's milk. Fermentation plays a vital role in West African cuisine; prolonging shelf life in the hot climate.

Mix all of the ingredients in a bowl, tip into a deep tray and bake for 35 minutes at 180 degrees until golden brown on top.

Ingredients: (makes one loaf)

- 250g cornmeal
- 2 tsp bicarbonate soda
- 2 eggs
- 200ml butter milk
- pinch of chilli powder
- salt and pepper to season.

Riz Gras

The French cousin of jollof, this rice dish is a mainstay of any Burkinabe party. Across the country WaterAid's projects play a critical role in supporting rice irrigation.

Ingredients (serves 4)

- Oil
- 3 garlic cloves
- 2 red chillies
- 1-inch piece of ginger
- 1 onion
- 4 chicken thighs
- 3 peppers
- 2 tsp tomato puree
- 1 stock cube
- 200g long grain rice
- salt and pepper
- lemon & parsley to garnish.



Wash the rice in a sieve until the water runs clear.

Mince the garlic, ginger, chilli and onion into a fine paste and fry gently in oil with salt and pepper. Add the meat and colour, followed by the chopped peppers.

Stir in the tomato puree, crumbled stock cube and rice. Pour in enough water to cover the mixture by 1 inch. Place a lid on, reduce heat and simmer.

After 25 minutes, check if the water has been absorbed and the rice is soft. Garnish with thin slices of onion and lemon and chopped parsley.



Roast the aubergine over hot coals or in an oven at 180 degrees, peel and mix the flesh with diced onion, spices, seasoning and peeled, raw tomatoes.

Roasted aubergine, tomato and onion salsa

A dish is straight out of Moustapha's garden, roasted over a hot fire.

Ingredients (serves 4)

- 2 aubergines
- ½ onion
- 4 tomatoes
- ½ tsp coriander seed
- salt and black pepper.

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Ingredients (serves 4)

- 500ml pineapple juice
- 1 tbsp. spoon tamarind paste
- 2-inch piece of ginger
- sugar to taste
- 50g millet flour (optional).

A traditional Burkinabe drink served to welcome newcomers.

Blend the pineapple and ginger until smooth followed by the tamarind paste. Pour through a fine strainer to serve with ice. Add sugar to taste.

For the genuine Burkinabe drink, add millet flour to the mix before straining.

