**NIGERIAN EGUSI STEW AND EBA (GARI, SWALLOW, FUFU) MADE EASY**

*Egusi stew is a Nigerian delicacy that is eaten virtually all over the country, though preparation varies between regions. For our purpose, we will make it the Ibo way. Eba or Gari swallow is made from processed cassava, and is very prominent in Ibo diet. It is similar to Tuwo in the Northern part of Nigeria and Pounded Yam in the West, which would accompany such a stew in those regions.*

**Ingredients:**

*All these stews use a lot of seasonings, like Maggi cubes (chicken or fish bouillons) and others. But for health reasons, I just go simple and mainly use salt and thyme flakes.*

chicken, meat, and/or fish, cut into pieces

2-3 small onions, chopped

salt

seasonings: thyme, cayenne pepper, Cajun, seasoning salt, bay, basil – add what you like!

2 Jalapeno or other peppers

2 cups of Egusi seeds (melon seeds), ground very fine (can substitute blanched almonds or sunflower seeds)

1 bell pepper (optional)

2 tomatoes

1 cup dried crayfish

2-3 tsp. palm oil (or part palm, part vegetable oil)

small bunch collard greens, chopped (to steam down to about 1 cup)

**Preparation:**

Boil chicken pieces with one onion, salt, seasonings, and one jalapeno.

While the chicken is boiling, grind the Egusi seeds with one small onion. Put in a pot with water. Begin to boil the ground Egusi with water so that it can really cook, about 10-15 minutes.

Grind remaining onions, bell pepper, tomatoes, and jalapeno into a paste. Add to the Egusi, and boil together for another 10-15 minutes.

Add the cooked chicken with its stock, ground crayfish, and oil.

Cover and let it simmer until the consistency is no longer watery.

Add collard greens. Cover first for about 3-5 minutes to steam and preserve the green color, then stir into the stew for about one minute.

**Making Gari Swallow:**

*The estimated ratio of gari to water is roughly 1:2. Can be more or less, depending on desired consistency. This dish is called swallow, because it’s so soft you don’t have to chew it – just make a ball, dip it in stew, and swallow!*

Put water in a pot and bring to a boil. Turn off heat, and sprinkle the gari flakes onto the water. Cover for few minutes, then stir thoroughly with a folding motion, adding more hot water to reach the desired consistency.

Serve with the Egusi stew. Enjoy with your fingers, preferably!