A TOUR OF AFRICAN GASTRONOMY

CABO VERDE
Cabo Verdean cuisine is based on typical dishes made mainly from corn and beans, sweet potatoes and cassava, which resulted from an adaptation of gastronomy to the climate. Due to the poverty of the soil, Cabo Verdeans made feats in transforming the scarce food resources into a particularly rich gastronomy, that brings pride to the national culture (Castro, 2003).

In this perspective, traditional dishes such as Katxupa, which is made from corn, the main food product of Cabo Verdeans, have been preserved since colonization. Katxupa is a structuring element of Cabo Verde identity across any of the islands. Xeren is also made with corn, adding coconut milk to give it a more attractive flavour. Corn is also the basis of the well-known Djasida (cornmeal porridge cooked with fava beans or others) and of Kuskus, cornmeal pastry, much appreciated. These dishes are culturally recognized by Cabo Verdeans inside and outside the country, as well as by all those looking for Cabo Verde as a touristic or residency destination. This shows how the culture and gastronomy of a nation or community are closely linked.

Gastronomy has its own characteristics, made of original flavours, which place Cabo Verde as unique in the world. “Gastronomy is a heritage inventory as culturally important as museums, festivals, dances and religious temples” (Freixa & Chaves, 2008, p. 19). Cabo Verdean gastronomy is, in its essence, one of its cultural riches, and Cabo Verdeans knew how to create and invent from what was available. A few centuries later, it has remained intact in the memory of the Cabo Verdean Nation, and, despite being adapted to the modern times, it did not lose the traditional and emblematic (Chantre, 1993).

The most striking findings regarding the dietary habits of the population of Cabo Verde, at the dawn of its history, is that two distinct diets were maintained for a long time. Not so much because of the obvious double origin of the inhabitants (Europeans and Africans), but from the firm conviction at the time that, Europeans would not resist the African diet, and Africans would not cope with the Mediterranean diet.

The archipelago of Cabo Verde was discovered in 1460 by Italian and Portuguese navigators. The island of Santiago offered the most favorable conditions and thus the settlement started there in 1462.

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CORN
It is a well-known cereal grown all over the world, and an essential element of local gastronomy.

BEANS
Common beans are the basis of various soups and *feijoada*, mixed with rice.

FLYING FISH
*Exocoetus volitans*, which can be observed on the surface, flying very long distances, is also an example of Cabo Verdean fisheries.

BANANA
It is grown in 130 countries, it is very common in Cabo Verde.

PAPAYA
It is a tropical fruit with numerous health benefits, and is easily found in Cabo Verde.

WANT TO BRING SOME PRODUCTS BACK HOME?
For those who want to buy souvenirs, it is worth to visit the Center in any of the country’s cities. In every city of the country, there are Municipal Markets, places that sell a little bit of everything from corn, fruit and meat to clothing and handcrafted products.

It is worth going to the first floor to get beautiful photos of the typical color and liveliness of a market. You can always visit workshops such as *L’lambic* in Sal island, *Cape Verde Art and Design* in São Vicente or *D-Concept in Plateau* in Cidade da Praia, Santiago island.
**TOP 5 LOCAL BITES TO SAMPLE**

**KATXUPA**
*It is done over the weekend and for many servings.*
It is similar to feijoada (with a lot of meats, sometimes fish too) and has a lengthy preparation. It has to be done in a *panelona* (big pan).

**MORAY**
*A fish that sometimes scares divers, the locals eat it, breaded, as a bar snack.*

**SEAFOOD**
*In Cabo Verde it is easy to find a lot of very affordable seafood.*
Aside many types of fish, you can often find octopus, squid and shrimp.

**DJAGACIDA**
*A very spiced corn flour, accompanied by bottle butter, rice, beans and some delicious fish.*
This dish is something special, and is usually served on weekends.

**FEIJOADA**
*Cabo Verdean feijoada is essentially any mixture of beans with a lot of broth, vegetables and pieces of meat.*
It looks more like a soup than a feijoada.

**DID YOU KNOW?**
In Cabo Verde the word grog *(grogu or grog ’ in Creole)* designates simple sugar cane brandy, that is rum. The methods are fundamentally artisanal and almost all of the sugar cane is used for the production of grog. The crushing of the cane is carried out in wharfs.
Since he started studying at the School of Hotel and Tourism of Algarve, Amílcar has been living his dream of being a Chef. He wishes to have his own restaurant, with a menu by Chef Amílcar, but says that dreams accompany him in his personal and professional life.

Chef Amílcar always wanted to return to Cabo Verde and contribute to its development, training of professionals with an excellent attitude in this field. “Cabo Verde appeared as a challenge like so many I have had and many that I still hope to have, with the added value of being able to exercise what I like in my country, that I love. I accepted the offer to be the Executive Head of the School of Hospitality and Tourism of Cabo Verde, under a contract that involves cooperation with Luxembourg”.

“Nowadays it is necessary to make a difference, to put a personal touch. We are all different and we all have a personal touch, we have to know how to find it and highlight it».
Soak the corn and beans 24 hours before.

Cook in a pan with water flavoured with garlic, bay leaf and onion, add the corn and the beans.

In another pan put olive oil, garlic, tomato, chopped peppers and let it sauté for 5 minutes. Add pork and salted meat and let it stew until it is cooked. Correct the spices and set aside.

In the pan that the corn is cooking, put chorizo and whole blood meat sausage to cook around 10 minutes, add the meat that is already cooked. Optional add the tuna head and the pork, add the vegetables by cooking time: 1st cabbage; 2nd cassava; 3rd sweet potatoes and finally pumpkin. Leave to heat until everything is cooked.

In a frying pan make a stew with oil, 2 onions and chopped garlic, 2 bay leaves, and let sauté. To finish the katxupa, correct the seasoning and finally add chopped herbs (coriander and parsley) and let it sit for a bit before serving.
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A PROJECT BY

UNWTO
World Tourism Organization

IN COLLABORATION WITH

Governo de Cabo Verde

AUGUST 2021