

mmhmm

**“GUAVA  
SEASON”**

25 budget friendly recipes by baidawi

# FORRWURRDD



Greetings and thank you for checking out the first of what I hope can be a series of recipe books.

My name is Baidawi Assing and I am the voice and hands behind the “Mmhhh” series on the EatAhFood YouTube channel. When I’m not cooking in the kitchen I am busy producing content and running the EatAhFood channel behind the scenes.



*“Guava Season – a period of difficulty or doing without”*

- Dictionary of the English/Creole of Trinidad and Tobago

“Guava Season” is a phrase I have been hearing and using for as far back as I can remember. Choosing “Guava Season” as title of this first edition was important to me. It reflects the current financial conditions facing many people, not just in Trinidad & Tobago but around the world as well.

Making elaborate dishes is fun and makes for great photos on social media. However, I am a content creator who is interested in the politics of food as much as how it is grown prepared and enjoyed. As such, these recipes reflect who I am and the truth is I rarely cook “fancy” meals. Most of my cooking is down to earth, humble and in many ways, cost effective. The recipes you will find in this book are authentic and a true representation of my real-life experiences.

These are recipes that I love, and I am happy to share with you. So, I hope you find them relatable. I hope that you prepare and share these meals with family and friends. And I hope they bring you comfort and nourishment.

This book is dedicated to my mother Zina. Of the many meals she prepared for us when growing up, the Stewed Tuna is the one that stands out the most and it is my favorite recipe in this book.

If you do try any of these recipes, please post a photo to IG or Twitter and tag EatAhFood on social media.

Twitter [@eatahfood](https://twitter.com/eatahfood)

IG [@eatahfoodtt](https://www.instagram.com/eatahfoodtt)

**“GUAVA  
SEASON”**

# INTRO

## NAVIGATING THE GUAVA SEASON

A big part of reducing my food bill is knowing what ingredients to buy and where to buy them. One of the things you will notice about the recipes in this book is that they are mostly vegetarian or vegan. The reason for that is simple. It's cheaper to prepare vegetarian meals than it is to make meat based dishes. So while I am not a vegetarian or a vegan, most of my everyday cooking is centered around that type of diet.

The best place to get fresh vegetables and ground provisions is in your local market. While there may be some level of convenience involved in shopping in the supermarket, the opportunity cost is the ability to form an interpersonal relationship with the vendors. Building these relationships are important as the dynamic is not a rigorous one between a business and a consumer but rather something more personal and dynamic, with a mutual understanding that we're all in this together.

## ESSENTIAL INGREDIENTS

Stocking your cupboard and fridge with particular ingredients is also a contributing factor when it comes to cooking on a budget. Some of my go-to staples that can be found in the supermarket are parboiled rice, pasta, all purpose flour and cornmeal. Ground provisions are a must when I visit the market. Cassava and dasheen are my favourites but on occasion I might also go for some sweet potato or eddoes if the price is right.

Green fig is a staple that deserves honorable mention. It is an extremely versatile ingredient that pairs well with almost any protein based dish, whether peas, beans, meat or fish. It is a very cheap item in the market but if you're lucky it is something you can get for free if you have a neighbor with a fig tree in their yard.

Some of my other favorite affordable ingredients to stock up on are dried or canned peas and beans. Legumes are heavily featured in a lot of my recipes because they are incredibly versatile and always delicious. I have never met a legume that I didn't like and my philosophy is... "If there is a pea or a bean you don't like, chances are you're cooking it wrong".



**“GUAVA  
SEASON”**

# RECIPES

[Quick Veggie Soup](#)

[Sweet Potato Pie](#)

[Curried Pumpkin](#)

[Vegan Cassava Pies](#)

[Bhagi Arepas](#)

[Pasta In Pumpkin Sauce](#)

[One Pot Pasta](#)

[Sauteed Cassava](#)

[Carrot Muffins](#)

[Sago Porridge](#)

[Stewed Lentils](#)

[Quick Chickpeas Soup](#)

[Spicy Spaghetti with Peas & Carrots](#)

[Green Fig & Stewed Pigeon Peas](#)

[Chicken Bhagi Rice](#)

[Stewed Tuna](#)

[Plantain Porridge](#)

[Mini Coconut Bakes](#)

[Stewed Red Beans](#)

[CooCoo](#)

# QUICK VEGGIE SOUP



**“GUAVA  
SEASON”**

# QUICK VEGGIE SOUP



This is the perfect recipe to whip up when you have no time to mess around in the kitchen but still need something warm and wholesome to consume. This recipe is also a great way to make use of any odds and ends in your fridge so they don't go to waste. You can also swap out the potatoes and add any provision of your choice.

With five minutes of prep time and ten minutes to cook, this 15-minute veggie soup uses the most basic pantry items and transforms them into quick and easy comfort food.

## INGREDIENTS

- 1 carrot (diced)
- 1 potato (cut into small cubes)
- 1 medium sized onion (diced)
- 2 cloves of garlic (minced)
- 2 pimentos (finely chopped)
- 1 celery stalk (finely chopped)
- 3 tbsp olive oil
- 2 cups water
- salt and black pepper (to taste)

## DIRECTIONS

1. Add oil to a pot on medium heat.
2. Add onion, garlic, carrot, potato, pimentos and celery then sauté for 3 minutes.
3. Season with salt and black pepper to taste.
4. Add water and bring to a rolling boil.
5. Simmer for 8 to 10 minutes.
6. Finish with fresh celery.
7. Serve hot & enjoy.

# SWEET POTATO PIE



**“GUAVA SEASON”**

# SWEET POTATO PIE

This recipe for sweet potato pie is one I came up with a couple years ago. I experimented with a combination of spices and different herbs but ultimately settled on this combination. Sweet potato is... well... sweet, so I used precise flavor combinations to contrast and compliment the sweetness. I did weigh the sweet potatoes when I purchased them in the market, but I can't remember the weight. I don't have a scale in the kitchen (should probably get one) and I'm not one of those people who can "heff" a grap of plantains and tell you with clinical precision "yeah this is three and a half pounds!" So, for this recipe which is a family size serving of sweet potato pie, I had 6 medium sized sweet potatoes.

Now it's totally up to you if you wanted to add cheese to this dish. I used to in the past and might still do so from time to time, but I tend to enjoy this as is. Its beauty is in the simplicity of it. You can use a muffin tray to make single serving pies or even use a spoon and scoop out individual portions on a baking tray for a more rustic approach.

You can switch out the butter for olive oil or coconut oil and switch the milk to coconut milk or you could even omit the milk all together and just leave some of the boiled water in the sweet potatoes when draining to make this a vegan dish. Of course, you want this to be cool before cutting it, or you will end up with baked mashed potato.

## INGREDIENTS

- 1/2 cup melted butter
- 1 cup full cream milk
- 1 head of garlic
- 1 tbsp geera (cumin) seeds
- 1 tbsp paprika
- 1 sprig of rosemary
- salt & black pepper (to taste)

## DIRECTIONS

1. Put a pot of water on the stove to boil then start off by peeling and dicing the sweet potatoes into half inch cubes. Put them in a bowl of water to stop it from oxidizing.
2. When your water comes to a boil, add a teaspoon of salt then add the sweet potato. This will take about 10-15 minutes to cook.
3. Smash and finely dice your garlic. I would say use the whole head of garlic but if you're not a huge fan of garlic you can stop following Eatahfood right now. (Just kidding). Go ahead and use about 4 cloves if you are so inclined.
4. Toast the geera/cumin seeds in a pan. Once they start to pop, they are ready.
5. Finely chop the fresh rosemary.
6. Once potatoes are cooked till tender, strain in a colander then put back in your pot.
7. Add the melted butter, milk, toasted geera, paprika and black pepper then mix. If you find your mixture to be a little stiff, don't be afraid to add a bit more milk.
8. Add mixture to a 12-inch pan/baking dish and bake in the oven for 45 mins – 1 hour at 350 degrees (F).



# CURRIED PUMPKIN



**“GUAVA  
SEASON”**

# CURRY PUMPKIN



Any one who says vegan cooking is bland is definitely doing it wrong. This Curried Pumpkin recipe is a vegan dish that is warm with immense depth of flavor from the blend of spices and aromatics used in its preparation. This isn't the popular pumpkin choka/talkari that you would commonly find in roti shops across Trinidad & Tobago but it is extremely tasty and a great side dish for your sada roti.

## INGREDIENTS

- 1 tbsp mustard seeds
- 1 tbsp geera or cumin seeds
- 1 tbsp fenugreek or methi
- 1 tbsp turmeric powder
- 1 tbsp chili flakes
- 1 tsp cinnamon powder
- 6 cardamom pods
- 6 curry leaves
- 8 cloves of garlic (minced)
- 2 tbsp of ginger (minced)
- 3 cups pumpkin (diced)
- 2 cups tomatoes (diced)
- 1 medium onion (diced)
- 1/2 cup of water
- 2 tbsp coconut oil

## DIRECTIONS

1. Toast spices in coconut oil: mustard seeds, geera, methi, cardamom (3 minutes)
2. Add turmeric and curry leaves, sauté for 1 minute
3. Sauté onions for 3 minutes or until translucent
4. Add garlic and ginger, sauté for 2 minutes
5. Add chili flakes and cinnamon powder, sauté for 2 minutes
6. Add pumpkin and tomatoes, sauté for 5 minutes uncovered
7. Season with salt and black pepper to taste
8. Add 1/2 cup of water
9. Reduce heat to low, cover and allow to simmer for 15-20 minutes or until pumpkin is tender
10. Enjoy

# VEGAN CASSAVA PIES



**“GUAVA SEASON”**

# VEGAN CASSAVA PIES



This is one of my favorite recipes using a ground provision. Cassava pie or cassava cake is a great way to transform a simple ingredient into something impressive. The great thing about this recipe is that you can experiment with different ingredients to make it your own. Add cheese for a more luxurious product or season it with spices like paprika or geera. You can also switch out the rosemary for fine thyme or any other herb of your choice. The possibilities with this recipe are endless.

With just a few extra ingredients and steps you can transform this ground provision into something that pairs beautifully with some stewed lentil peas.

## INGREDIENTS

- 2 lbs of cassava
- 4 cloves of garlic (minced)
- 3 sprigs of rosemary (finely chopped)
- 1 cup of coconut milk
- 1/4 cup of olive oil
- salt & black pepper (to taste)

## DIRECTIONS

1. Peel cassava and cut into 2-inch chunks.
2. Boil cassava chunks in salted water for about 25 to 30 minutes.
3. Using a fork, remove root from boiled cassava chunks.
4. Add chopped garlic, rosemary, olive oil and coconut milk.
5. Mash until you reach your desired texture and consistency. I'm going for a rustic finish where you get small chunks of cassava between the smooth mash, but you can go for a totally creamy finish if you want.
6. Add mixture to a greased muffin tray or use a spoon to portion them out into individual pies for a rustic, free form finish.
7. Bake in a preheated oven at 375 degrees (F) for 10 minutes or until golden brown.
8. Allow to cool before serving.
9. Enjoy!

# BHAGI AREPAS



**“GUAVA  
SEASON”**

# BHAGI AREPAS



I came up with the idea of this recipe while eating a Saheena and thinking of a way to use dasheen bush to create a similar snack that was less oily. So, I thought about using cornmeal and treating the combination of flavors like cocoo and callaloo. This recipe is a true fusion of cultures where Indian, African, and indigenous Latin cuisines come together to create an amazing vegan dish that's easy to prepare.

This is fusion cooking!

## INGREDIENTS

- 1 bundle of callaloo bush (approx 30 dasheen leaves)
- 4 pimentos
- 5 small tomatoes
- 1 medium onion
- 4 cloves of garlic
- 4 shadon beni leaves
- 2 1/2 cups water
- 2 cups white cornmeal
- salt & black pepper (to taste)

## DIRECTIONS - BHAGI

1. Place the dasheen leaves flat on top each other then roll into a bundle. Then cut into long thin strips.
2. To a pot, add some oil and sauté onions until translucent.
3. Add garlic and pimentos and sauté for 1 minute.
4. Add tomatoes, shadon beni then season with salt and black pepper. Sauté for 2 minutes.
5. Add dasheen leaves and stir in the pot to distribute the aromatics evenly.
6. Cover and allow to cook on a low heat for 25 minutes.

## DIRECTIONS - AREPAS

1. Gradually add cornmeal to water while stirring to create a smooth mixture.
2. Once thoroughly combined transfer to your countertop or a flat surface and knead for 1 minute or until the dough is smooth. Allow it to rest for 5 minutes.
3. Distributing the dough into even portions should give you six arepas that are about 3 1/2 inches in circumference and about half inch thick.
4. Heat a frying pan or griddle and cook the arepas for about 6 to 8 minutes on each side.
5. Stuff arepas with your bhagi filling and enjoy warm.

# PASTA IN ROASTED PUMPKIN SAUCE



**“GUAVA SEASON”**

# PASTA IN ROASTED PUMPKIN SAUCE



Pasta is a popular ingredient for dinner ideas mostly because it doesn't take long to prepare. This recipe swaps out the ever popular roasted butternut squash for pumpkin. Roasting the pumpkin caramelizes it and breaks down the natural sugars in the product which results in a wonderful and intense pumpkin flavor. With the addition of coconut milk you're well on your way to a delicious pasta sauce. Omit the cheese and butter in this recipe if you don't want to consume any dairy products.

Feel free to add a bay leaf and a splash of roucou in there to incorporate even more local flavor into this dish and take it to the next level!

## INGREDIENTS

- 1 pack pasta (penne or farfalle work well for this recipe)
- 2 lbs pumpkin (cubed)
- 1 cup coconut milk
- 1 head of garlic
- 3 tbsp olive oil
- 1 tbsp paprika
- 3 sprigs rosemary (finely chopped)
- 1/2 tsp freshly grated nutmeg
- salt & black pepper (to taste)
- 2 tbsp salted butter
- grated cheddar cheese for topping (optional)

## DIRECTIONS

1. Cut pumpkin into quarter inch pieces, toss in olive oil and place on a baking tray.
2. Rub one head of garlic with olive oil and add to the tray.
3. Roast pumpkin and garlic in a preheated oven at 400 degrees (F) for 25 minutes.
4. Cook pasta in salted, boiling water for 12-15 minutes.
5. Remove the flesh of the roasted garlic cloves.
6. Add two tablespoons of butter to a pan, add garlic and pumpkin.
7. Season with salt, black pepper, paprika, rosemary and fresh nutmeg.
8. Add coconut milk and allow to cook for 5 minutes.
9. Remove from heat and toss the pasta.
10. Top with cheese.
11. Serve hot; enjoy.



# ONE POT PASTA



**“GUAVA  
SEASON”**

# ONE POT PASTA



I think everyone loves a good pasta dish and this one is great because it's a vegetarian dish and it's all done in one pot, so it takes less prep time and less cleaning up to do when you're done.

It might seem a bit crazy to add pasta to the pot with no liquid but that is the point where we mitigate the seemingly mandatory vegetable stock addition that many of these recipes use. Covering the pasta and allowing it to cook with the veggies for 4 minutes on low heat uses the steam coming from the veggies and aromatics to infuse all the intense flavors into the pasta itself. So, no need to use any vegetable stock or flavor cubes.

Of course, you can make the recipe your own by adding whatever vegetables you like, and you can also add cheese to it, but I assure you, you're not going to miss any cheese in this dish.

## INGREDIENTS

- 1 pack of pasta
- 1 large onion (chopped)
- 4 cloves of garlic (minced)
- 3 bay leaves
- 1 large zucchini (cubed)
- 4 tomatoes (diced)
- 1/2 cup fresh basil leaves
- 1 sweet pepper (chopped)
- 1 tbsp roucou
- 1 tbsp butter
- 4 tbsp olive oil
- 1 scotch bonnet pepper (minced)
- 1 cup coconut milk
- 1 1/2 cups hot water
- salt & black pepper (to taste)

## DIRECTIONS

- Melt butter in a pot and add combine with two tablespoons of olive oil.
- Sauté some chopped onions until translucent.
- Add garlic, bay leaves, zucchini, and scotch bonnet pepper. Sauté for 1 minute.
- Add tomatoes, 1/2 of the fresh basil leaves and sweet pepper.
- Season with salt and black pepper and sauté for 1 minute.
- Add roucou and pasta.
- Combine mixture then cover and allow to cook for 4 minutes on low heat.
- Add coconut milk and water.
- Taste for seasoning and season with salt and black pepper to taste.
- Combine then cover and allow to cook on medium heat for an additional 8 minutes.
- Remove from heat and drizzle with olive oil and finish off with remaining fresh basil leaves.
- Serve and enjoy!

# SAUTEED CASSAVA



**“GUAVA SEASON”**

# SAUTEED CASSAVA



This recipe is another way to prepare and enjoy one of my favorite ground provisions. Whip up an excellent vegan side dish to go with your favorite legume or meat or fish.

You can swap out the cassava and use other ground provisions like dasheen, eddoes or even green fig. I love the use of fine thyme here as the herb of choice but feel free to switch it out for shadon beni, rosemary, taragon or parsley.

This is the type of recipe that is more about the approach and is very open to interpretation. So don't be afraid to experiment with this one. Go ahead and make it yours!

## INGREDIENTS

- 2lbs cassava
- 2 cloves of garlic (minced)
- 1 large onion (julienne)
- 3 pimentos (julienne)
- 1 sweet pepper (julienne)
- 1 cup carrots (julienne)
- 3 sprigs of fine thyme
- salt & black pepper (to taste)

## DIRECTIONS

1. Peel cassava, cut into 2-inch pieces.
2. Boil in salted water for 15 minutes or until tender but firm.
3. Sauté onion, garlic, pimento, sweet pepper, and carrots on medium heat for 1 minute.
4. Toss with cooked cassava.
5. Season with salt and black pepper to taste.
6. Add fresh thyme.

# CARROT MUFFINS



**“GUAVA SEASON”**

# CARROT MUFFINS



You ever open your crisper and see one carrot straying and not too sure what to do with it? Most times that carrot ends up in a soup, a pelau or some coleslaw. This recipe for carrot muffins is a great alternative and a quick and easy way to utilize those stray carrots in your fridge in 45 minutes or less.

These are best enjoyed while still warm with a nice hot cup of tea or coffee. They are perfect as a breakfast muffin or for an evening snack!

## INGREDIENTS

- 2 1/2 cups flour
- 1 1/2 tsp baking soda
- 2 tsp baking powder
- 2 cups grated carrots
- 1 cup olive oil
- 2 eggs
- 1 tsp cinnamon
- 1 tsp cardamom
- 1/2 tsp salt
- 1 cup of brown sugar

## DIRECTIONS

1. Sift two and a half cups of all-purpose flour into a bowl.
2. Sift in 1 1/2 teaspoons of baking soda and 2 teaspoons of baking powder.
3. Add 1 tsp of cinnamon.
4. Add 1 tsp cardamom.
5. Add a pinch of salt.
6. Using a whisk, make sure all the dry ingredients are fully incorporated.
7. Add brown sugar and olive oil to a bowl and whisk for 30 seconds to a minute
8. Add eggs to mixture and beat lightly.
9. Add dry ingredients into wet and mix until fully combined.
10. Fold in grated carrot.
11. Add equal portions into a muffin tray and bake in an oven preheated at 350 degrees (F) for 22 minutes
12. Allow to cool and enjoy!

**“GUAVA  
SEASON”**

# SAGO PORRIDGE



**“GUAVA SEASON”**

# SAGO PORRIDGE



If I had to list dishes that immediately take me back to my childhood this would be in the top five.

My grandmother used to make this when I was a child and when she passed away in my teens, many years passed before I had sago again. I was too young and not interested enough in cooking back then to know what she was using to flavor her sago porridge but many years later, testing the recipe for myself I was certain that the three spices that made their way into that dish for sure were clove, bay leaf and nutmeg.

Now I know from jump that this will be a very polarizing recipe. People either love sago or hate it but I feel like the people who hated it as children and never bothered to try it again as adults should give this recipe a try again.

There are different approaches to making sago, some recipes say to soak it in water until the tapioca pearls get plump. Others say never to cook it on high heat or too low.

All these rules might lead you to believe that it's a complicated process, but it is truly an easy dish to create.

## INGREDIENTS

- 1 cup water
- 1/2 cup milk
- 3/4 cup tapioca pearls or sago
- 1 bay leaf
- 3 grains of whole clove
- 1/4 tsp freshly grated nutmeg
- salt & sugar to taste

## DIRECTIONS

1. Add room temperature water to a pot.
2. Add sago, cloves, bay leaf and season with salt to taste.
3. Bring to a simmer on medium heat and cook for 8 to 10 minutes. Keep stirring as the mixture thickens.
4. Add milk and nutmeg and sweeten to taste.
5. Cook for another 8 to 10 minutes or until mixture has reached the desired consistency.
6. Serve warm topped with freshly grated nutmeg or spice of choice.
7. Enjoy!



# STEWED LENTILS



**“GUAVA SEASON”**

# STEWED LENTILS



I think it's safe to say that stewed lentil peas can easily make into a top ten list of best Trinbagonian comfort foods. This delicious vegan dish is easily one of my favorite things to make and one of my favorite things to eat.

Stewed lentils go with anything! Have it with rice, dumplings, provision, or bread. Pair it with stewed beef or fish to complete the meal. Lentil peas is the ultimate comfort food in Trinidad & Tobago. The unsung hero that doesn't get its just due in the food conversation.

In this recipe we pay respects to stewed lentil peas. Thank you for being delicious.

## INGREDIENTS

- 16oz dried lentil peas
- 1 large onion (diced)
- 6 cloves of garlic (minced)
- 1 1/2" piece of ginger (minced)
- 4 pimentos (minced)
- 1 cup of pumpkin (cubed)
- 1 sprig of rosemary (finely chopped)
- 1/4 teaspoon grated nutmeg
- 1 scotch bonnet pepper
- 2 tbsp roucou
- 1 bay leaf
- 4 cups of water
- 3 tbsp oil
- salt and pepper (to taste)

## DIRECTIONS

1. Heat oil in a heavy iron pot then sauté aromatics and veggies for one minute on high heat: onion, garlic, ginger, pimento, and pumpkin.
2. Add dried lentils and continue to sauté for another minute.
3. Add roucou & rosemary.
4. Season with salt and black pepper then sauté for 30 seconds.
5. Add water, bay leaf and scotch bonnet pepper.
6. Bring to a boil on high heat.
7. Reduce heat to low, cover and allow to simmer for 45 minutes.
8. Transfer peas to a bowl.
9. Return the pot to a high flame, add brown sugar and caramelize until dark brown.
10. Add peas then mix thoroughly.
11. Cover and allow to simmer on low heat for 5 minutes.
12. Serve & enjoy!

*\*top up with water as needed if peas mixture becomes too dry*

**“GUAVA  
SEASON”**

# QUICK CHANNA SOUP



“GUAVA  
SEASON”

# QUICK CHANNA SOUP



This quick chickpea soup or channa soup is an easy way to transform that can of chickpeas/channa into something wholesome and delicious. I came up with this recipe on the fly while live streaming on our YouTube channel as I wanted to demonstrate how you could use basic pantry items to achieve a great final product with little effort.

I went for maximum nourishment with this dish, so I left the skins on the provisions, after all we're not just filling our bellies but also trying to eat healthily.

## INGREDIENTS

- 1 can of chickpeas/channa
- 1 large potato (cubed)
- 1 carrot (cubed)
- 1 medium sized onion (diced)
- 5 cloves of garlic (minced)
- 1 thumb sized piece of ginger (minced)
- 3 pimentos (finely chopped)
- 4 leaves of shadon beni (finely chopped)
- 1 tbsp whole geera
- 1 tbsp paprika
- 1 cup coconut milk
- 1 tbsp tomato paste
- 3 cups hot water
- salt & black pepper (to taste)
- 2 tbsp vegetable oil

## DIRECTIONS

1. Drain chickpeas from brine then rinse thoroughly.
2. Measure 1/4 cup of the chickpeas and mash using a fork or mortar and pestle. This will be used to thicken the soup.
3. Heat oil in a pot, add geera and toast for 20 seconds.
4. Add onions and sauté for 45 seconds.
5. Add garlic, ginger, and pimentos. Sauté for 30 seconds.
6. Add potatoes, carrots, and chickpeas, paprika.
7. Season with salt and black pepper then cover and allow to simmer on low heat for one minute.
8. Add tomato paste, coconut milk, water, and half of the shadon beni.
9. Cover and allow to cook for 8 minutes or until potatoes and carrots are fork tender.
10. Add remaining shadon beni.
11. Serve and enjoy!

# SPICY SPAGHETTI WITH PEAS & CARROTS



**“GUAVA  
SEASON”**

# SPICY SPAGHETTI WITH PEAS & CARROTS



This Spicy Spaghetti with Peas & Carrots is a recipe that takes me back to my teenage years, learning my way around the kitchen and trying to make delicious food from some basic items that I could buy in the parlour. Back then I didn't know anything about olive oil or chili flakes, so this version is a bit of an upgrade, but the fundamentals remain the same.

Some might consider this “bachelor food” but this recipe is a great way to utilize those pantry essentials to create an amazing lunch or dinner.

## INGREDIENTS

- 1 pack of spaghetti
- 1 tin of peas and carrots (drained)
- 1 medium sized onion (diced)
- 8 cloves of garlic (sliced)
- 2 cloves of garlic (minced)
- 5 tbsp tomato paste
- 1 tbsp Italian seasoning
- 1 tsp cayenne pepper
- 1 tbsp crushed chili flakes
- olive oil
- salt and black pepper (to taste)

## DIRECTIONS

1. Bring a pot of water to a rolling boil. Season with a pinch of salt then add pasta.
2. Cook for 8 to 10 minutes.
3. Add 4 tablespoons of olive oil to a pan then sauté onions for 2 minutes until translucent.
4. Add minced garlic, Italian seasoning, and cayenne pepper.
5. Sauté for 45 seconds.
6. Add tomato paste, reduce heat, then cook for 5 to 7 minutes.
7. Season with salt and black pepper to taste.
8. Add about 5 ladles of the pasta water to tomato mixture.
9. Continue to cook for 3 minutes.
10. Add peas and carrots then cook for another 2 minutes.
11. Add 1/4 of olive oil to a pot.
12. Add sliced garlic and red chili flakes.
13. Sauté for 30 seconds then turn off flame.
14. Add drained pasta to the pot then season with black pepper.
15. Toss until the ingredients are well combined.
16. Serve peas and carrots over spaghetti & enjoy!

# GREEN FIG & STEWED PIGEON PEAS



“GUAVA SEASON”

# GREEN FIG & STEWED PIGEON PEAS

This simple boiled green fig with a creamy and delicious stewed pigeon peas is a must try. It is an amazing 30-minute lunch or dinner idea, humble but delicious. Trini vegetarian cooking at its best.

There's something to be said about being able to provide sustenance from something within reach for so many Trinbagonians. Green fig or green banana is the perfect substitute to the main go-to starches of rice and pasta and the kind of staple that transforms any meal into what I would consider "real food".

Growing up in Morvant, it seemed like everyone had a fig tree in their yard and it's still something you see a lot in certain areas. Truth be told, it's been a while since I had green fig but doing this recipe reminded me of the pleasures of being able to live off the land and it will be used way more prominently in my personal cooking going forward.



## INGREDIENTS

- 1 hand of green fig
- 1 pot of boiling water
- 1 can green pigeon peas
- 1 cup of pumpkin (cubed)
- 1 carrot (cubed)
- 1 onion (diced)
- 4 cloves of garlic (minced)
- 1 sweet pepper (diced)
- 1 tsp coriander seeds
- 4 shadon beni leaves (chopped)
- 1 cup coconut milk
- 2 bay leaves
- 1 tbsp roucou
- 2 tbsp vegetable oil
- salt & black pepper (to taste)

## DIRECTIONS: GREEN FIG

1. Add a generous pinch of salt to pot with boiling water.
2. Add green fig then boil for 10 minutes.
3. Drain water then allow to cool.
4. Use a paring knife to cut the skin of the fig then peel, removing all the skin from the fig.

## DIRECTIONS: STEWED PIGEON PEAS

1. Add oil to a pot then sauté onion, coriander seeds and garlic.
2. Add pumpkin, carrots, sweet pepper, and pigeon peas.
3. Season with salt and black pepper to taste then continue to sauté for 2 minutes.
4. Add half the shadon beni, coconut milk, roucou and bay leaves.
5. Cover and allow to cook for 10 minutes or until pumpkin and carrots are tender.
6. Turn off heat then add remaining shadon beni.
7. Serve with green fig & enjoy!

**“GUAVA  
SEASON”**



# CHICKEN BHAGI RICE



“GUAVA SEASON”

# CHICKEN BHAGI RICE



This is one of those spur of the moment, “raid de fridge” recipes that delivers great flavor and satisfaction without breaking a sweat. This is the perfect one pot rice dish that you can tweak to add any odds and ends you might have in the fridge to make it your own.

## INGREDIENTS

- 3 pre-seasoned chicken breasts (cut into bite sized chunks)
- 2 cups of parboiled rice (rinsed)
- 1 bundle of callaloo bush (cut into strips)
- 1 large onion (diced)
- 5 cloves of garlic (minced)
- 2 tsp minced ginger
- 2 pimentos (finely chopped)
- 1 scotch bonnet pepper
- 1 cup pumpkin (finely diced)
- 2 cups coconut milk
- 2 tbsp butter
- 1 tbsp roucou
- 2 bay leaves
- 4 shadon beni leaves finely chopped
- 1 tsp garam masala or amchar masala
- 4 tbsp olive oil
- salt & black pepper (to taste)

## DIRECTIONS

1. Heat oil in a pot then add chicken breasts and garam masala.
2. Sauté for 1 minute.
3. Add onions then continue to sauté for 2 minutes.
4. Add garlic, ginger, pimento and 1/2 of the shadon beni continue to sauté for 1 minute.
5. Add pumpkin, season with salt & black pepper to taste then continue to sauté for 1 minute.
6. Add callaloo bush, cover and allow to steam for 2 to 3 minutes.
7. Remove cover then toss ingredients.
8. Add rice, butter, roucou and bay leaves.
9. Combine well then cover and allow to steam for 3 to 5 minutes.
10. Add coconut milk then season with salt.
11. Add scotch bonnet pepper then cover and allow to cook on low heat for 15 minutes.
12. Check for seasoning and adjust to suit.
13. Add remainder of the shadon beni and combine well.
14. Serve & enjoy!

# STEWED TUNA



**“GUAVA SEASON”**

# STEWED TUNA



This is a dish my mother used to make for us when I was growing up so naturally, I thought it was a common thing. As it turns out, Stewed Tuna is not as common as I thought it was and most people just use canned tuna to make Tuna Salad. However, if you like canned tuna and never had this dish before, this is a recipe that can change your life. Thus far everyone who has doubted me on this recipe and tried it themselves have had nothing but high praises for this dish.

This meal remains one of the simplest but most delicious things I have ever eaten. Thanks Mummy!

## INGREDIENTS

- 2 tins of tuna chunks in water
- 1 large onion (thinly sliced)
- 2 garlic cloves (minced)
- 2 pimento peppers (sliced)
- 2 tomatoes (diced)
- 2-3 shadon beni leaves (chopped finely)
- 2 tbsps roucou
- 1 tbsp lime juice
- salt & black pepper (to taste)

## DIRECTIONS

1. Sauté onions on medium to high heat for 30 seconds.
2. Add garlic and pimentos and continue to sauté for another 30 seconds until aromatics are fragrant.
3. Add tuna chunks and tomatoes.
4. Squeeze in the juice from the lime.
5. Add roucou.
6. Add shadon beni.
7. Season with salt & pepper to taste.
8. Add two tablespoons of water (optional).
9. Reduce to low heat, cover, and simmer for 5 minutes.
10. Serve with bread, bake, rice, or pasta.
11. Enjoy!

# PLANTAIN PORRIDGE



“GUAVA SEASON”

# PLANTAIN PORRIDGE



I came up with this recipe for Plantain Porridge after a failed attempt at making fufu a couple weeks ago and it turned out so good that I decided to do a video on how to prepare it.

Honestly, I don't know how the thought of doing this never occurred to me before but as they say, better late than never. I was also under the impression that I had stumbled upon something unique and original but as it turns out, Plantain Porridge is already a thing.

If you never heard about Plantain Porridge you may be a bit hesitant or unsure about this recipe but trust me on this one. If you love plantain, you will love Plantain Porridge.

## INGREDIENTS

- 2 ripe plantains
- 1 1/2 cups water
- 1 cup coconut milk
- 1 cinnamon stick
- 2 cardamom pods
- 1 bay leaf
- salt (to taste)
- Angostura Original Bitters

## DIRECTIONS

1. Cut plantains into thin rounds.
2. Put plantains into a food processor then blend until smooth.
3. Place plantain puree into a pot with water.
4. Add salt, cinnamon, cardamom, and bay leaf.
5. Cook for 5 minutes on medium heat until the puree turns amber in color.
6. Add coconut milk then simmer on low heat for 8 minutes.
7. Serve hot with a couple dashes of Angostura Original Bitters.

**“GUAVA  
SEASON”**

# MINI COCONUT BAKES



**“GUAVA SEASON”**

# MINI COCONUT BAKES



These mini coconut bakes or coconut buns are an adaptation of an existing recipe on the website. Coconut Bake with sausage is a ubiquitous breakfast item in Trinidad & Tobago.

Despite being widely popular, it is seldom mentioned in Trini breakfast conversations. Fried sausage is another popular item that is typically made with hotdog franks or vienna sausages.

For this recipe I used chicken salami that's sautéed with onions and peppers in a ketchup and soy sauce mixture to create a quick and delicious filling for our mini coconut bakes.

## INGREDIENTS

- 4 cups all-purpose flour
- 1 cup grated coconut
- 1 tbsp yeast
- 1 tsp sugar
- 2 tsp salt
- 2 tbsp vegetable shortening
- 1 1/4 cup coconut milk
- 1/4 tsp grated nutmeg
- 2 tbsp unsalted butter or oil



## FRIED SALAMI

### INGREDIENTS

- 2 cups chopped salami
- 1 onion sliced
- 1 sweet pepper sliced
- 2 pimentos sliced
- 1 tbsp cayenne pepper
- 1 tbsp soy sauce
- 1/4 cup ketchup
- 1/4 cup water for deglazing
- 2 tbsp oil for frying

## DIRECTIONS

1. Add dry ingredients to a bowl then combine well.
2. Add vegetable shortening and coconut milk then mix until a ball of dough is formed.
3. Transfer dough to a work surface and knead until a smooth ball is formed (8 mins).
4. Cover dough with a damp towel and allow to proof for 1 hour.
5. Divide dough into 8-10 equal portions then form them into tight balls.
6. Place on a baking tray with equal spacing between dough balls .
7. Cover and allow to proof for 30 minutes.
8. Bake in a preheated oven at 350 degrees (F) for 15 to 20 minutes or until golden brown.
9. Brush bakes with butter or oil as soon as they come out of the oven.
10. Allow to cool for at least 5 minutes before enjoying.

## FRIED SALAMI DIRECTIONS

1. Add oil to a hot pan then add salami and fry for one minute.
2. Add onion, sweet pepper and pimentos then fry for one minute.
3. Add ketchup, soy sauce and pepper flakes then sauté for 3 minutes.
4. Deglaze pan with water and cook until the sauce has thickened. (Approx 45 seconds)
5. Serve and enjoy!



# STEWED RED BEANS



**“GUAVA  
SEASON”**

# STEWED RED BEANS



Stewed red beans is a popular side dish in a typical Trini Sunday lunch. Using the basic Trinbagonian mirepoix of onion, garlic, ginger and pimento is a good starting point for a great final product.

For this recipe, I add a few extra ingredients to create delicious stew edred beans using a pressure cooker. The addition of all-spice aka pimento sneaks in some Jamaican flavors to this dish.

This recipe does not require overnight soaking in water and/or baking soda.

## INGREDIENTS

- 2 cups red beans (rinsed)
- 2 large onions (diced)
- 4 cloves garlic (minced)
- 2 tbsp ginger (minced)
- 6 pimentos (chopped)
- 1 bundle celery (chopped)
- 2 cups pumpkin (cubed)
- 2 tbsp fine thyme
- 2 tbsp roucou
- 2 tbsp tomato paste
- 1 bay leaf
- 1 tbsp all-spice/ pimento/ juniper berries crushed or ground into a powder
- 12 cups water
- 3 tbsp vegetable oil
- salt & black pepper to taste

## DIRECTIONS

1. Add oil to pressure cooker on medium/high heat then sauté onions until translucent and softened.
2. Add all spice then continue to sauté for 30 seconds.
3. Add garlic, ginger, pimento, and celery then continue to sauté for 1 minute.
4. Add pumpkin then season with salt and black pepper to taste. Sauté for 2 minutes.
5. Add red beans, roucou, bay leaf, tomato paste and water.
6. Cover then allow the beans to cook in pressure cooker for 90 minutes.
7. Allow steam to be released from pressure cooker before safely removing the cover.
8. Taste for salt and adjust as needed.
9. Add fresh thyme.
10. If beans are too thick, add 3/4 cups of water to loosen.
11. Serve & enjoy!

**COOCO**



**“GUAVA SEASON”**

# COOCOO



Cocoo is popular dish in the Caribbean that is typically made with cornmeal. In Trinidad & Tobago, cocoo is commonly served with callaloo and stewed fish or fried fish but I love to have it with callaloo. I added some sauteed aromatics and roucou to this cocoo recipe for extra flavor and it also gives the finish product a warm amber color.

## INGREDIENTS

- 2 cups cornmeal
- 2 cups coconut milk
- 2 cups water
- 1 medium sized onion (finely chopped)
- 3 pimentos (finely chopped)
- 8 ochro/okra (finely chopped)
- 4 cloves garlic (minced)
- 1 tsp roucou
- 3 tbsp olive oil
- 2 tbsp butter
- salt & black pepper (to taste)

## DIRECTIONS

1. Add olive oil and butter to a pot then sauté onion, pimento and ochro for 1 minute uncovered.
2. Season with salt and black pepper then cover and allow to cook for 2 minutes.
3. Add garlic then sauté for one minute.
4. Add coconut milk, 1 cup of water and roucou to the mixture.
5. Bring mixture to a boil then reduce heat and allow to simmer for 10 minutes.
6. Season with salt and black pepper.
7. Remove from heat then gradually stream and whisk cornmeal into mixture until combined.
8. Using a wooden spoon, combine mixture until smooth.
9. Return mixture to stove on low heat then add 1 cup of water.
10. Using the wooden spoon, continue to mix until fully combined and smooth.
11. Allow mixture to cook on low heat for 5 minutes.
12. Transfer cocoo to a greased bowl or dish and allow to set for at least 30 minutes.
13. Serve & enjoy!

**“GUAVA  
SEASON”**



**THANK YOU**

Each of these recipes is the outcome of a long line of influence. I unwittingly draw inspiration from the taste of my grandmothers' macaroni pie, callaloo, sago and sponge cake. Past memories of my mother's stewed tuna, stuffed prunes for Old Years, the smell of ghee in the kitchen for Eid or freshly baked homemade bread on a Saturday evening defines my cooking in the present. My grandfather's mauby on a Sunday morning and my father's corn pie linger in the back of my mind when I am in the kitchen.

I know that I am not alone and that each person reading this can call upon similar fond memories and experiences with family and food.

Whether you're a long time cook, enthusiast or a newbie to the kitchen, I hope you that you try these recipes. And while this is a recipe book, by no means do I intend for it to be a manual with hard and fast rules for you to follow. Each one of them was developed in trial and error so don't be afraid to experiment.

It was a pleasure putting together this collection of recipes and I thank you for allowing me to share them with you. I look forward to you sharing your creations with me on social media and I hope that you join me as I continue my adventures in food.

Thank you.

Baidawi Assing  
Bay Leaf & Roucou Advocate

**STAY CONNECTED**

