

Fr Henry's *Abacha*

"This traditional delicacy of the "Igbo" people in southeast Nigeria is aromatic and nutritious. Known as African Salad, "Abacha" is made from shredded dried cassava.

Ingredients:

8 cups of dried *Abacha* (desiccated sweet cassava)
150ml of palm oil (or vegetable oil)
edible powdered potash (1 teaspoon)
Ehu seeds (3) (African nutmeg) substitute with nutmeg
2 cups of *Ugba* (fermented African Oil Bean seed).
½ cup of crayfish (substitute with can of crabmeat, or dried prawns)
1 stock cube (fish, chicken, beef, or vegetable, it's up to you)
salt and pepper to taste.
3 garden eggs (optional)(Substitute with eggplant)
Utazi leaves (optional)(Substitute with spinach or kale)
Garden egg leaves (optional) (substitute spinach or kale)

Method

1. Soak desiccated *Abacha* in boiled water for about 3 minutes (or cold water for 10 minutes).
2. Place *abacha* into sieve to drain and remove water.
3. Dissolve potash in half a cup of water.
4. Slice the onions, garden egg leaves. and *Utazi* (spinach/kale) leaves. Set aside, to use for topping.
5. Heat the *ugba* in a small pot with 3 tbsp. water (30 ml) and allow to heat for 4 minutes
6. Filter the dissolved potash into a mortar or pot leaving out the residue.
7. Add 150 ml of palm oil to it and stir until it forms a thick yellowish paste.
8. Stir properly before adding the crayfish and pepper, followed by the ground *ehu*.
9. Add the *Ugba* and a seasoning cube. Stir all together and taste for salt.
10. Now add the *abacha*!
11. Serve with fried meat or fish. Then the leaves and a few slices of onions.

Ugba, also known as *Ukpaka*, is made from oil bean seeds which are cooked for several hours then sliced, washed, and left to ferment a little bit.

Abacha is dried Cassava. Cassava is a tropical root vegetable which is high in starch. You cannot eat cassava raw because it is toxic. Which is why we use the dried Abacha, which has gone through a process of being soaked and dried.

Sweet Cassava has a nutty taste and is a very good source of essential minerals including calcium, manganese, iron, phosphorus, and potassium.