

JAMAICA

STARTER

JAMAICAN BEEF PATTY HOT PEPPER RELISH

THE APPETIZER ON THIS MONTH'S MENU IS *JAMAICAN BEEF PATTIES*. TRADITIONALLY FILLED WITH MEAT, SEAFOOD, OR VEGETABLES AND SEASONED WITH GARLIC, THYME, SALT, ALLSPICE, AND SCOTCH BONNET PEPPER, THE *JAMAICAN PATTY* IS A SPIN ON AN ENGLISH MEAT PIE. IT IS A REMAINING VESTIGE OF THE BRITISH EMPIRE THAT RULED JAMAICA AS A COLONY FOR NEARLY THREE HUNDRED YEARS UNTIL IT BECAME INDEPENDENT IN 1962.

ENTREE

JERK CHICKEN MARINATED AIRLINE BREAST, RICE & PEAS, SPICY JERK SAUCE

THE ENTRÉE, *JERK CHICKEN*, IS ANOTHER PERFECT EXAMPLE OF THE DIVERSE ROOTS OF JAMAICAN CUISINE. IT COMBINES THE NATIVE *TAINO*'S USE OF ALLSPICE WOOD, A TROPICAL SPECIES OF EVERGREEN TREE, WITH THE COOKING AND SEASONING METHODS OF ENSLAVED AFRICANS. THE END PRODUCT IS THE FAMOUS *JERK*, MEAT SMOKED WITH A FLAVORFUL AND SPICY RUB MADE FROM SALT, SCOTCH BONNET PEPPERS, CINNAMON, ALLSPICE, AND OTHER SEASONINGS. SERVED AT HOME OR FROM LARGE BARRELS ON A STREET CORNER, *JERK CHICKEN WITH RICE AND "PEAS"* IS A JAMAICAN STAPLE. NOTE THE "PEAS" IN JAMAICAN CUISINE ARE RED KIDNEY BEANS.

SIDE

CALLALOO & YAMS

THE SIDE FOR THE MEAL IS *CALLALOO AND YAMS*, ANOTHER DISH HIGHLIGHTING THE DIVERSE BACKGROUND OF JAMAICAN CUISINE. *CALLALOO* IS A NATIVE WEST AFRICAN DISH MADE FROM INDIGENOUS CARIBBEAN GREEN LEAF PLANTS. SOMETIMES A STEW, SOMETIMES A SOUP, *CALLALOO* IS AN ODE TO THE RESOURCEFUL WAY THAT ENSLAVED AFRICANS REPURPOSED INDIGENOUS PLANT LIFE AND ACCESSIBLE AROMATICS INTO A NOURISHING STAPLE. IT CAN BE EATEN AS BREAKFAST OR A SIDE DISH AND CAN BE EATEN TOGETHER WITH SALTFISH, CONCH, OKRA, PUMPKIN, OR AS WE HAVE HERE, YAMS.

DESSERT

JAMAICAN FRUIT CAKE CANDIED PLANTAIN ICE CREAM

JAMAICAN FRUIT CAKE IS A CHRISTMAS TRADITION AND A FAVORED GIFT AMONGST JAMAICANS. RUM CAKE IS A TYPE OF DESSERT RELATED TO THE FRUIT PUDDING RECIPES BROUGHT TO THE CARIBBEAN BY EUROPEAN COLONISTS IN THE 18TH CENTURY. AS CHEFS HAD TO WORRY ABOUT STORING FOOD IN THE WARM AND HUMID TEMPERATURES, SUGAR AND ALCOHOL BEGAN TO PLAY AN IMPORTANT ROLE IN PRESERVING FOOD.