

Caribbean Recipes

Caribbean Banana Muffins

2 cups flour	1 teaspoon baking soda
½ teaspoon baking powder	½ teaspoon salt
½ cup butter	1 cup brown sugar
2 large eggs	3 medium bananas
1 tablespoon rum or vanilla extract	1 cup shredded coconut
½ cup chopped dried pineapple	

Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Prepare 12 muffin cups with paper liners or spray with nonstick cooking spray. Sift the flour, baking soda, baking powder, and salt into a bowl; set aside. In a larger bowl, cream together butter and sugar until light and fluffy. Beat in the eggs one at a time, mixing well after each addition. Beat in the bananas and extract. Stir in the flour mixture. Fold in the shredded coconut and pineapple, mixing just enough to evenly distribute through the batter. Evenly divide the batter between the muffin cups. Bake in preheated oven until a toothpick inserted into the center comes out clean, about 20-25 minutes. Makes 12 servings.

Each serving provides 322 calories, 4 grams protein, 47 grams carbohydrate, 14 grams fat, 297 milligrams sodium, 3 grams fiber.

Quick Mango Salsa

2 mangos, peeled, seeded and chopped	1 large tomato, diced
1 small onion, minced	1 small jalapeno pepper, seeded and minced
1 tablespoon minced fresh cilantro	1 lime, juiced

Salt and pepper to taste

Stir all ingredients together in bowl. Serve with pita chips, fish, beef or chicken. Makes 8 servings.

Each serving provides 35 calories, .6 grams protein, 9 grams carbohydrate, .2 grams fat, 51 milligrams sodium, 1 gram fiber.

Island Okra

3 tablespoons olive oil	1 large onion, thinly sliced
2 cloves garlic, minced	4 cups fresh okra, ends trimmed and halved lengthwise
Salt and pepper to taste	1 lime, juiced

Heat olive oil in skillet over medium heat. Stir in the onion and garlic, cook and stir until onion has softened and turned translucent, about 5 minutes. Add the okra, salt and pepper. Increase the heat to high; cook and stir until the okra begins to brown, about 10 minutes. Pour the lime juice over the okra and continue cooking for 2 minutes. Makes 6 servings.

Each serving provides 96 calories, 2 grams protein, 9 grams carbohydrate, 7 grams fat, 72 milligrams sodium, 3 grams fiber.

Kala

2 cups dried black-eyed peas	2 egg whites
1 teaspoon salt	½ cup flour
1 teaspoon cayenne pepper	Vegetable oil for frying

Place the black-eyed peas into a container and cover with several inches of water. Allow to stand for 12 hours. Drain the water from the black-eyed peas. Place peas into a food processor and pulse until coarsely ground, or mash with a fork or potato masher to get the same consistency. Stir in egg whites, salt, flour and cayenne pepper until dough consistency. Add more flour if necessary to hold the mixture together. Form into small balls, about 2 inches in diameter. Heat the oil in a heavy skillet over medium high heat. Carefully drop the balls into the hot oil and fry until brown, about 5 minutes. Turn frequently to brown evenly on all sides. Makes 10 servings.

Each serving provides 217 calories, 9 grams protein, 25 grams carbohydrate, 9 grams fat, 249 milligrams sodium, 4 grams fiber.

Sazon

1 tablespoon ground coriander	1 tablespoon ground cumin
1 tablespoon paprika	1 tablespoon garlic powder
1 teaspoon salt	

Combine all ingredients and mix well. Store in an airtight container. 1 ½ teaspoons of this mix equals one packet of commercial sazón mix. Makes 22 servings.

Each serving provides 0 calories, .1g protein, .5 grams carbohydrates, .1 grams fat, 100 milligrams sodium, .1 grams fiber.

Caribbean White Beans

1 tablespoon olive oil	½ onion, chopped
½ green bell pepper, chopped	½ cup water
1 (15.5 ounce) can small white beans	1(6.5 ounce) can tomato sauce
1 ½ teaspoons minced garlic	1 sprig cilantro, coarsely chopped
¼ cup calabaza or acorn squash, peeled and medium diced	
1 packet of sazón seasoning	1 cube chicken bouillon
Salt and pepper to taste	1 pinch cumin

Heat olive oil in a large saucepan over medium high heat. Stir in the onion and green pepper; cook until the onion begins to turn brown, about 5 minutes. Pour in the water, white beans, tomato sauce, garlic, cilantro, and squash. Season with the sazón packet, bouillon cube, salt, pepper and cumin. Stir well to combine. Bring to a boil, then reduce heat to a simmer, cover and cook until the squash is softened, about 20 minutes. Remove the cover and continue cooking until the sauce has thickened, about 10 more minutes. Makes 6 servings.

Each serving provides 121 calories, 6 grams protein, 19 grams carbohydrate, 3 grams fat, 548 milligrams sodium, 4 grams fiber.

Quick Caribbean Quesadillas

¼ cup honey mustard	2 tablespoons pineapple preserves
8 (10 inch) flour tortillas	1 ½ cups shredded Swiss cheese
2 tablespoons butter	2 cups chopped cooked chicken
½ cup cooked crumbled bacon	1 ½ cups unsweetened pineapple tidbits, drained

In a small bowl, stir together the honey mustard and pineapple preserves. Divide the mixture evenly between 4 of the tortillas. Spread evening to within 1 inch of the edges. Distribute the Swiss cheese, chicken, and bacon evenly over the pineapple mixture; top with the remaining tortillas to make quesadillas. Preheat the oven to 250 degrees. Heat a large skillet over medium heat. Melt a small amount of butter in the skillet. Place one of the quesadillas into the skillet and fry on each side until lightly browned and the cheese has melted, about 1 to 1 ½ minutes per side. Keep cooked quesadillas in a warm oven while you fry the remaining. To serve, cut each quesadilla into 6 wedges and arrange on a platter with pineapple tidbits in the center. Makes 8 servings.

Each serving provides 600 calories, 32 grams protein, 53 grams carbohydrate, 29 grams fat, 898 milligrams sodium, 3 grams fiber.

Caribbean Health Drink

1 cup chopped carrot	1 banana
1 kiwi, peeled	1 apple, peeled, cored, and sliced
1 cup chopped pineapple	1 cup ice cubes

Blend all ingredients in a blender until smooth. Makes 2 servings.

Each serving provides 178 calories, 2 grams protein, 45 grams carbohydrate, .8 gram fat, 51 milligrams sodium, 7 grams fiber.

Jamaican Spinach Soup

3 tablespoons olive oil	1 onion, chopped
2 stalks celery, chopped	4 cloves garlic, minced
2 tablespoons fresh ginger, minced	1 tablespoon sugar
2 teaspoons salt	¼ teaspoon ground turmeric
¼ teaspoon ground allspice	¼ teaspoon ground nutmeg
2 potatoes, peeled and diced	4 cups chopped zucchini
6 cups vegetable stock or chicken broth	1 pinch cayenne pepper
1 cup chopped fresh spinach	½ red bell pepper, minced

Heat the oil in a large pot over medium heat. Stir in onion, celery, garlic, ginger and sugar. Cook 5 minutes until onion is tender. Season with salt, turmeric, allspice and nutmeg. Mix in potatoes and zucchini, and pour in the broth. Bring to a boil, reduce the heat to low and simmer 10 minutes, or until potatoes are tender. Remove soup from heat, season with cayenne pepper and stir in spinach. Garnish with red bell pepper to serve. Makes 8 servings.

Each serving provides 124 calories, 3 grams protein, 17 grams carbohydrate, 6 grams fat, 667 milligrams sodium, 3 grams fiber.