

Recipe for Lenten Evening Meal:

South African Curried Pickled Fish (Serves 8-10 people)

One of the oldest recipes of the Cape, pickled fish, is undoubtedly of Indonesian/Malay origin. In countries with hot tropical climates the spices help preserve food. In the Cape pickled fish are often served with warm Hot Cross buns on Good Friday and Easter Saturday. This dish should be prepared 2 or 3 days before consumption and kept in the refrigerator for several days to marinate.

Ingredients:

4 lbs firm white fish cut into blocks (Approximately 2" X 3" X 1")
Lard, oil or clarified butter.
4-6 large onions, sliced in medium rings
3 tablespoons curry powder
1 green chilli finely chopped
12 whole cloves
2 teaspoons coriander seeds
2 tablespoons mango or other chutney
2 tablespoons vinegar
bruised bay leaves or lemon leaves

Additional ingredients for Pickle sauce:

4 cups vinegar
3 tablespoons curry powder
2 teaspoons turmeric
2 tablespoons brown sugar

Instructions:

1. Cut the fish into portions or blocks (2" X 3"). Salt and leave for 30 minutes. Wipe off the salt with a clean cloth and fry the fish in lard, cooking oil or clarified butter until the fish will flake easily with a fork. Set the fish aside.
2. Brown half the onions in oil in a frying pan. Add the curry powder, chilli, cloves, coriander seeds and mix well. Add a teaspoon of vinegar or so and stir while cooking until the ingredients make a smooth paste.
3. In a casserole layer the fish, spreading some of the paste over each layer and place a few bay leaves or lemon leaves in between layers.
4. Make the pickle sauce. Boil the vinegar, diluting it with a little water if it is too sharp for your taste. Mix the curry powder, turmeric and sugar and stir into a smooth paste with a little water. Add this paste to the vinegar together with the remaining onions and boil until the onions are just tender.
5. Pour the pickle sauce over the layered fish in the casserole and let cool completely before putting the cover on.
6. Allow the pickled fish to marinate in the refrigerator for at least 2 days before serving.
7. Serve with warm Hot Cross Buns.