



Escovitch Fish with Rice and Beans, Fried Plantains and Cabbage
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4-6 medium and cleaned white fish
2 white onions, chopped
3 large bell peppers - red, yellow and green, chopped
4-6 whole garlic cloves, cleaned
Green onions, roughly chopped
Carrots, roughly sliced
Oil for frying (preferably avocado oil or another high smoke point oil)

For seasoning:

2 whole limes
Bay leaves
Creole seasoning or all-purpose seasoning
Salt
Pepper
Fresh thyme
Fresh parsley
Dried oregano
Allspice berries
Onion powder
Garlic powder
Dried ginger
1 fresh or dried (1 tsp) scotch bonnet pepper or habanero pepper
1 cup white vinegar



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Clean and descale whole fish. Fresh fish with the head on is preferable for flavor, but if that's not an option, just leave the tail and skin on. The best fish for this dish are redfish, trout, bass, founder or tilapia. When cleaning fish, squeeze the juice of two whole limes into clean water and rub the limes against the entire body of the fish. Rinse and repeat if necessary.

After cleaning, score the fish skin, which will allow the flavors to penetrate the inside of the fish and make it easier to eat after cooking.

Season with salt, pepper and Creole seasoning or all-purpose seasoning. Set aside. Roughly chop the onions, bell peppers, carrots, garlic and green onions. Chop at a larger size so they retain their structure and color.

Heat a large deep pan with 2-3 inches of avocado oil or enough so half of the fish is submerged in the oil. When the oil is hot, cook the fish on each side for 5-8 minutes or until light to medium brown on both sides. After frying fish, set aside cooked fish and cover so they stay warm. Lower heat to medium and add onions, bell peppers, and carrots, thyme until slightly softened.

Add garlic, ginger, bay leaves, allspice berries and scotch bonnet pepper. After 3-5 minutes when garlic and ginger are softened, add remaining seasonings to taste.

Once everything is incorporated, add ½ cup of vinegar. Add more vinegar if you'd like the sauce to be more tart. Lower heat to medium, add whole cooked fish back to pan and spoon sauce over the fish. Add green onions. Cover for 15-20 minutes before serving. Before serving, remove thyme stems, bay leaves, and scotch bonnet peppers.

**Notes:**

Make sure oil is hot before adding fish. Otherwise, fish will be oily and will take longer to brown.

The longer the dish sits, the better it will taste. This dish is best cooked ahead of time or a day in advance.

If you don't want to fry your fish, you can also grill it. The goal is to get a nice color on the skin.

For a thicker sauce, add $\frac{1}{4}$ a cup of cornstarch mix with $\frac{1}{4}$ cup of cold water. Add half the mixture slowly into the sauce or until you reach the consistency you like.

Taste is key! This is Caribbean soul food, so let your taste buds guide you.

Suggested side dishes***Rice and Beans***

2 cups of jasmine rice (or any rice of choice)

1 cup of coconut milk

1 16 oz can of red kidney beans

Clean and strain can of red kidney beans and set aside. In a large bowl or pot, add rice and water to wash your rice and remove contaminants and extra starch. Drain and repeat with clean water, two additional times or until water is nearly clear.

After cleaning the rice, add coconut milk and water until it is one inch above the level of the rice, no more.

Cook on high heat for 10 minutes or until small circles form at the top. Lower the heat and cover with a fitted lid and cook for an additional 5 minutes. After 5 minutes, turn off the heat and remove it from the burner.



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Stir and add a piece of foil or parchment paper over the pot, covering the entire pot, to allow the rice to steam for the rest of the cooking process. Check to ensure it's cooked through.

If it's not cooked throughout, add 2 tablespoons of water, and heat on low/medium temperature, covered. Check occasionally until the rice is tender. Add scotch bonnet pepper and one green onion during the cooking process for more flavor.

Steamed Veggies

1 whole cabbage
1 zucchini
1 yellow squash
1 cup carrots, sliced or shredded
4 Tbsp butter or margarine
Water
Salt
Onion powder
Garlic powder

Bring a medium-to-large pot to boil, filling the pot halfway with water. Once boiling, add salt and seasonings. Then add cabbage and cover.

Once softened and bright green, add butter or margarine and cut the heat. Stir and serve.

Reheat if needed, but don't leave the heat on as it will overcook your cabbage.



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Fried Plantains

Slice plantains ripe and sweet to your preference. In a fry pan, add avocado oil and heat to medium heat. Add slices allow to fry for 2-4 minutes per side, or until it reaches a golden brown color. Flip and repeat.

Place on paper towel to drain the remaining oil.

I recommend cooking this side last, as it cools the fastest.