

Green Fig & Salt Fish

Green Fig and Saltfish (Green figs are the local name for green bananas) is the National Dish of St. Lucia. This dish has its roots in 19th century slavery when bananas were plentiful and dried, salted codfish was cheaply imported from Canada to serve as rations for slaves. Over time, the slaves added their own spices to the dish and it became so popular on the island, that it was eventually recognized as the national dish of St. Lucia. The dish is typically prepared on weekends and especially for the Creole Day Festival held in October.

salt-fish	1 lb.
green bananas	8-12
vegetable / coconut oil	¼ cup
medium bell pepper (seeded and chopped)	1
large onion (peeled and diced)	1
pimento peppers (seeded and thinly sliced)	4
finely chopped chives	¼ cup
cloves garlic (grated)	3
fresh thyme	2 tsp.
Salt	
Black pepper	
Parsley (garnish)	

Directions for Preparing Green Fig and Saltfish

1. Rinse the green bananas and slice off both ends.
2. Make one slice lengthwise in each banana and place in a heat proof bowl.
3. Cover the bananas with hot water and let rest for about ten (0:10) minutes, then drain and allow to cool.

4. Carefully peel the bananas and place in a pot of boiling water with ½ teaspoon of salt and ¼ teaspoon of oil.
5. Bring to a boil and cook for fifteen (0:15) minutes until tender, then drain and cool.
6. Diagonally slice each banana into three pieces, then set aside.
7. Rinse the saltfish, then simmer in boiling water for fifteen (0:15) minutes to remove excess salt.
8. Drain the water and repeat the previous step.
9. Clean the saltfish by removing any scales, bones and viscera, then flake the fish with a fork and set aside.
10. Heat the remaining oil in a saucepan over medium heat.
11. Sauté the peppers, onions and half of the grated garlic for five (0:05) minutes until soft and fragrant.
12. Add the flaked saltfish, half of the thyme and half of the chives.
13. Stir well and cover the pan, allowing the herbs to cook for ten (0:10) minutes.
14. Uncover and add the remaining thyme, chives and garlic to the pot.
15. Season with salt and pepper, stir well and turn off the heat.
16. Plate portions of green bananas and top with generous servings of saltfish.
17. Garnish with chopped parsley and serve.