



Fried Hog's Head Cheese With Black-Eyed Pea and Sweet Potato Vinegar Caviar

Ingredients:

- 1 Pound fresh uncooked black-eyed peas, rinsed and drained
- 1 Cup chopped shallot
- ¼ Cup minced parsley
- 2 Tablespoons olive oil
- 1 Garlic clove, minced
- Pinch chopped fresh rosemary
- Pinch chopped fresh thyme
- ¼ Cup Sweet Potato Vinegar, recipe follows*
- 6 Ounces Hog's Head Cheese *
- 1 Egg, lightly beaten
- 1 Cup milk
- 1 Cup flour, seasoned to taste with salt and pepper
- 1 Cup Japanese bread crumbs (panko)
- Vegetable oil, for frying

Instructions:

1. In a large bowl, combine black-eyed peas and next 7 ingredients. Season to taste with salt and freshly ground black pepper. Cover and chill 2 to 4 hours.
2. In a Dutch oven or deep fryer, pour oil to a depth of 3 inches. Heat oil to 375°. Roll hog's head cheese into 6 balls. In a small bowl combine egg and milk. Coat each ball in flour, and then dip into egg wash. Roll in bread crumbs. Fry balls until golden brown. Drain on paper towels, and serve warm on bed of chilled black-eye pea mixture.

*Chef's Notes: One-quarter cup apple cider vinegar with a splash of white balsamic vinegar can be substituted for Sweet Potato Vinegar. Buy hog's head cheese from your local butcher or through an online retailer such as cajungrocer.com.

Servings: 6 croquets

Sweet Potato Vinegar

Ingredients:

- 1 Sweet potato, washed and cubed
- 2 Cups distilled white vinegar

Instructions:

1. In a large mason jar, place sweet potato, and cover with vinegar. Store in a cool, dark spot for 30 days. Strain mixture. Reserve liquid, and discard sweet potato.

Hog's Head Cheese

Ingredients:

- 1 Hog head
- 3 Pork shanks, foot attached
- 2 Pounds mirepoix (a mix of coarsely chopped onion, carrots, and celery)
- 3 Gallons water
- 1 Cup apple cider vinegar
- 1 Bunch flat-leaf parsley, chopped
- 1 Cup chopped green onion
- 1 Cup Creole seasoning, or to taste

Rinse hog head and shanks to remove any blood or dirt. In a very large pot, add hog head, shanks, mirepoix, 3 gallons water, and vinegar. Bring to a boil, then reduce heat and simmer for 6 hours.

Instructions:

1. Let mixture cool to room temperature, and strain to separate liquids from solids. Reserve liquid. Remove and discard vegetable scraps. Remove meat from bones, and finely chop it. Discard bones.
2. Return liquid to pot, and cook over medium heat until reduced by half. Add about 3 quarts of stock to chopped meat, and stir in parsley and green onion.
3. Season to taste with Creole seasoning.
4. Place seasoned meat mixture in plastic wrap-lined mold, and chill 8 hours or overnight.

Credits: Chef Manny Augello, Bread & Circus Provisions, Lafayette