



Ethiopian Christmas Celebration

Saturday 26th January 2013

Menu



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Aperitif

Tej (Mead)

Tej is a honey wine (hopefully you tasted some as you arrived) and is popular, along with Tella (bitter beer). Tej is normally served in round vase shaped containers called berele. It has a sweet taste which masks its high alcohol content. Tella tastes a bit like 'Guinness' and is a common cheap alcoholic drink. Making good Tej takes about 6 months and is normally made by the middle-class for wedding celebrations. People in south Ethiopia make Selo which is mainly made from barley and fermented over weeks and it is slightly thick and has a sweet taste.

Main Course

AZIFA (v) - medium

Lentils, green chilli, olive oil, fresh lime juice, mustard, red onion and fresh herbs

This dish is medium hot (chilli and mustard) and is normally served as a side dish. It is popular during the fasting season before Easter when many people in Ethiopia will refrain from eating meat and dairy products for two months, to replicate the 40 days fast of Jesus Christ. Easter is celebrated in line with the Julian calendar and is a bigger celebration than many other holidays, including Christmas. The best time to visit Ethiopia for vegetarians is the Easter season. If you happen to be in Ethiopia at this time it is best to spend it in Lalibela.

FOSSOLIA (v) - mild

Fine green beans, carrots, sunflower oil, ginger and garlic

This dish is subtly flavoured with crushed garlic and ginger. It is easy to make and a tasty vegetarian dish.

TIKEL GOMEN /YE ATIKELT WOT (v) - mild

White cabbage, potato, onion, garlic, ginger, turmeric, green chilli and sunflower oil.

This is a fresh ginger based dish that hopefully makes white cabbage one of your favourite foods.

ATER KIK WOT (v) - mild

Split peas, turmeric, garlic, ginger, sunflower oil and green chilli

This dish is made from boiled split peas then flavoured with turmeric and ginger. Once made it keeps well in the fridge and can be served hot or cold.

MISER WOT (v) - hot

Split lentils, berbere, sunflower oil, garlic and tomato paste

This dish is made with split lentils (it naturally has a sweet flavour). It is considered a vegetarian version of doro wot. This dish is quick to make, keeps well in the fridge for a mid-week meal.

DORO WOT - hot

Chicken, eggs, berbere, Ethiopian herbed butter, red onion, garlic, ginger and tomato puree (added to adjust for UK taste and reduce the amount of berbere)

Doro wot is considered to be the national dish of Ethiopia. It is a 'must' dish for Easter and New Year. A 'proper' lady knows how to cut a chicken into 12 perfect pieces. They all have names like Feresenga (a perfect cut of the breast customarily served to the man of the house) and no matter how many chickens she uses, they all come out the same shape! There are plenty of jokes about a woman who is not able to cut chicken properly! Killing animals is a job reserved for men but only women know how to cook it...men are not allowed into the kitchen!

KEY SIGA WOT - hot

Beef, berbere, Ethiopian herbed butter, red onion, garlic, Ethiopian spices and tomato puree (added to adjust for UK taste and reduce the amount of berbere)

Key Siga wot can also be made with cuts of mutton, it is cooked for a long time to give a succulent taste. In Ethiopia on holidays such as New Year, neighbours join together (into kircha) to buy a large ox and equally divide it then draw lots to decide which pile they get. It is cheaper than going to the butcher.

Injera (v)

Teff flour and water

This is Ethiopian national staple food. It is normally made from teff - a grain that is a fraction size of mustard seed. Teff is the favourite grain in many parts of Ethiopia for consumption and comes in a variety of colours (brown, white or dark red). It is a difficult crop to grow. The demand for it in the Europe and North America is growing as it is gluten free. The injera looks like a pancake but it has a sour taste. You either love or hate it! It can be sundried and people often took it when travelling as journeys often took many days.

Outside of Ethiopia Injera is made from wheat/sorghum/rice flour and water. Today we bring you a homemade injera (made in Bristol) by an Ethiopian lady (Sarah). She also baked the lovely onion seed flavoured bread.

Dessert

Fruit salad - Tiramisu - Baklava

Fruit is usually the main dessert in Ethiopia and often sugarcane. Rural children look forward to the market day as parents will buy it as a treat for them. Of course those born in some parts of the Rift Valley, Eastern and Southern Ethiopia go to the back yard to get fruit like guava, avocado, mango, papaya and pomegranate. They truly taste and smell much better than those we buy here! If you travel to Addis try ESPRIS Juice, it is a big glass of blended layered juice, our friends called them 'traffic light drink'!

Tiramisu is very popular in the cafes of Addis Ababa and other cities, a legacy of the unsuccessful attempt of Mussolini to colonise Ethiopia in the 1930s.

Baklava is popular with children and is often bought as an after school snack by middle class children in Addis Ababa on their way home.



After dinner

Buna (coffee) and Abeba Kolo (popcorn)

Coffee originated in a place called Keffa in the Sidamo region of Ethiopia. It is a social drink shared with neighbours. It is difficult to keep the making of coffee secret as it is almost always made fresh and the smell of roasting beans sends the message that it is coffee time to all the neighbours! When it is ready children are sent with messages of Buna Tetu 'come for coffee' and not inviting someone sends a message that the relationship is in trouble. People describe falling out with neighbours as 'they don't even drink coffee'. It takes at least an hour to make and is a job reserved for women. Girls are given clear instructions on how to roast, sit and pour it quietly so as to allow friends to share quality time.

Often a small snack is served with it like Injera sprinkled with Mitmita (very hot chilli powder), Kolo (roasted grains of barley, chickpeas and sunflower seeds), or Abeba Kolo (popcorn).

Other popular dishes that we don't have tonight are:-

SHIRO WOT - a sundried chickpea sauce with spices and herbs. It is an everyday dish you will find in many Ethiopian homes.

TIBS - prime cuts of the beef or mutton quickly fried with red onion and green chilli

KITFO - Hot and expensive dish to order. Prime cuts of beef, minced and marinated with very fine hot red chilli and spices and fresh herb butter (normally eaten raw or rare)

KOCHO - False banana tree root flour and water. As much as injera is the staple food for the majority in the central part of Ethiopia, in the south of the country teff is less popular. Kocho is the celebrated staple bread for tribes such as Gurage and Kembata. It is normally eaten with a variety of spinach and cabbage, fresh ayeb (cheese) and kitfo (succulent minced beef made with fresh herbed butter). The preparation of Kocho takes months and it is a social affair. The root is buried underground and taken out for preparation by women working in groups. The bright white dough is then wrapped in false banana tree leaves and baked in an open fire oven. It is delicious with a smoky flavour. Sadly we don't have it this evening.

Of course this is not an exhaustive list of Ethiopian food but should give you some idea and perhaps encourage you to cook at home and entertain friends. If you like any of our dishes, and would like to have the recipe just email us and we will be happy to supply you with an electronic copy of the For-Ethiopia cookbook (£5 - kindly designed by Jacqueline Conradie-Faul).

For any queries please Email event@For-ethiopia.com

We hope you enjoy the food!

Yours truly,

The For-ethiopia Trustees

Janet, Jerry, John, Julia, Paul, Rob, Sue and Tigist