

Black-Eyed Pea Soup
(perfect for New Year's Day if you're a Southerner!)

1 lb. dried black-eyed peas
2 Tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil
1 large onion, diced
2 large carrots, diced
2 ribs celery, diced
1 bunch of fresh collard greens, washed well, ribs removed, chopped (*about 4 cups*)
3 cloves garlic, peeled and minced
¼ tsp crushed red pepper flakes
2 meaty smoked ham hocks (or 1 ½ cups of leftover ham)
4 cups chicken broth, plus 4 additional cups of broth or water (homemade stock/broth is the best!)
½ cup rice
Salt and pepper to taste

1. Sort, pick, rinse beans. Place in large (7 qt or more) Dutch oven. Add 6 cups cold water. Bring to a boil and let boil for two minutes. Remove from heat, cover, and let beans soak 1 hour. Drain and rinse beans.
2. In Dutch oven over medium heat, heat olive oil. Add onions, carrots, celery, and greens and cook until softened, about 10 minutes. Add garlic and red pepper, cook 1 minute.
3. Add 8 cups of liquid, ham hocks, and rice. Bring to boil over medium high heat. Reduce heat and simmer for one hour.
4. After one hour, remove ham hocks. Tear the meat off the bones and return ham to the pot. (Freeze the bones for future use in making bone broth.). Season to taste. (If you use 8 cups of broth, be careful not to overseason.)

Note: The traditional New Year's Day dinner in the southern United States included pork (because pigs root in a forward direction, and we want to move forward with our lives), rice (overall prosperity), collard greens (folding money, "greenbacks") and black-eyed peas (coins to jingle in your pocket. Of course, we received this tradition from West Africa, and I am happy to give that credit now.