**Aruban Style Bacalao – Salted Cod**

Growing up, in a Catholic family on an island, it was impossible to get away from eating fish during Lent. Every Friday. Holy Week, though, my mother made it a rule that there will be no meat the whole week. Honestly, I think it was more because of the fact that she was not as big on meat and had a good excuse not to make it. My sister and I, we did not know the difference, so we rolled with it.

As I’m talking to my father, trying to recreate some of the meals that we used to eat, I distinctly remember the salted fish in a vinegary sauce that my mom used to make during Holy Week, when we would have family over for dinner. I remember my uncle loving that period in time. He was not Catholic.

Mom would let the cod fish sit in water overnight, about 18 to 24 hours, changing the water at least 3 times in between. Then she would painstakingly debone the fish. I remember the year that she actually found deboned salted cod. She was the happiest person on earth! So, she still would soak the salted cod fish for many hours, changing the water just the same.

**Ingredients:**

2-3 lbs deboned salted cod fish

1 onions cut in half and sliced in ¼ inch

1 small green pepper – julienned in ¼ inch

1 red pepper – julienned in ¼ inch

1 stalk of celery sliced at a diagonal ⅛ of an inch thick

3 cups of water

½ cup of ketchup

¼ cup of vinegar

3 tbs bouillon

1 tbs sugar

3 tbs butter

Directions:

Boil the 3 cups of water and add the salted fish and let it boil for 10 min. Check if the water is still salty. If it is, throw it out and warm another 3 cups of water and add the fish back in. Add 2 tbs of bouillon and let it cook for another 6 to 8 min.

In a pan, melt the butter and quickly sauté the onion, pepper and celery with the left-over tablespoon of bouillon and sugar for about 3 minutes. Take of the heat and add the vinegar.

Place the fish in a serving dish, add the liquid of the fish to the sautéed vegetables and stir. Check for taste and adjust as necessary. Add the mix over the fish. Serve with Aruba style polenta.

**Aruban Style Polenta:**

**Ingredients:**

* 4 cups of water
* 1 ½ cups of fine yellow or white corn meal (more if needed)
* 3 tbs of butter
* 3 tbs of bouillon

**Directions:**

Bring the water, butter and bouillon to a boil in a medium saucepan. While whisking, add the cornmeal, whisking so that it will not clump up. Let it simmer. The more it simmers the thicker it will get. Pour in a serving dish.