Acarajé

Acarajé is a dish from Bahia in the Northeast of Brazil. The roots are African. It is a fried dumpling that is made only with black-eyed peas seasoned with onions and fried in dendê oil. In Edmonton you find split black-eyed peas at the Excel African Store.

Ingredients:

- 500 grams of split black-eyed peas
- 1 medium onion
- 1 teaspoon of salt
- 3 cups of dendê oil

Procedure:

1. **Soak the split black-eyed peas**
   - Put the split black-eyed peas in a very deep bowl and cover with plenty of water.
   - Stir well and let it settle to the bottom of the bowl.
   - Using a strainer remove any shells that float to the top.
   - Keep stirring and removing shells until most of them are gone.
   - Drain the water using a large strainer to separate the peas.
   - Repeat the washing of the black-eyed peas two more times.
   - Leave the split black-eyed peas soaking over night.

2. **Prepare the dough**
   - Peel and roughly chop the onion.
   - Put chopped onion in the bowl of a large food processor, or blender, and process until is is a liquid puree.
   - Drain the split black-eyed peas very well and add to the food processor, or blender, and process until you obtain a smooth paste.
   - Add the grated onions and salt.
   - Process to incorporate.
   - Transfer the paste to the bowl of a standing mixer.
   - Process in the standing mixer, with the paddle attachment, for several minutes until the mixture double in volume.

3. **Fry the Acarajés**
   - Pour the dendê oil in a large heavy bottom pan — you can add non-flavored oil, such as Canola if you do not have enough Dendê.
   - Heat up the oil until it is moderately hot (350 F).
   - Using two large serving spoons form large clumps of the dough and drop in the hot oil.
• Acarajé should fry in moderately hot oil for a fairly long time — the exact time depend on the size of the acarajé.
• Once it got colour in one side, turn the acarajé. Keep turning from time to time until it is a deep mahogany colour.
• Serve immediately after frying with vatapá and a sauce made of tomatoes, onions, lime, cilantro and peppers.