

Cape Verde



Cape Verde, officially: República de Cabo Verde; Republic of Cape Verde is an archipelago republic in the Macaronesia ecoregion of the North Atlantic Ocean, off the western coast of Africa. The previously uninhabited islands were discovered and colonized by the Portuguese in the fifteenth century. The country is named after Cap Vert (meaning Green Cape) in Senegal, the westernmost point of continental Africa. The capital and largest city is Praia and Cape Verde gained independence from Portugal on July 5th 1975. Cape Verde was uninhabited when the Portuguese arrived in 1460 and made the islands part of the Portuguese empire. Due to its location off the coast of Africa, Cape Verde became an important watering station, then sugar cane plantation site, and later a major hub of the trans-atlantic slave trade, that would later form the contemporary African Diaspora.



Cape Verde is formed from the islands: Santo Antão, São Vicente, São Nicolau, Sal, Boa Vista, Maio Santiago (on which the capital is sited), Fogo and Bravia. Most inhabitants of Cape Verde are a genetic blend of Sub-Saharan Africans and Europeans, the Africans having been slaves and hailing mostly from Senegal, Gambia and Guinea-Bissau. Cape Verdeans' European ancestors include Portuguese settlers and exiles, Portuguese

Portuguese Empire. Many foreigners from other parts of the world settled Cape Verde as their permanent country. Most of them were Dutch, French, British, Arabs and Jews (from Lebanon and Morocco), Chinese (especially from Macau), Americans, and Brazilians (including people of Portuguese and African descent) settlers. All of these have been absorbed into the general Cape Verdean population. Cape Verde's official language is Portuguese. It is the language of instruction and official acts. However, the Cape Verdean Creole is used colloquially and is the mother tongue of virtually all Cape Verdeans. Cape Verdean Creole or Kriolu is a dialect continuum of a Portuguese-based creole, which varies from island to island. The majority of the population adheres to Christianity, mostly Catholicism which constitutes some 90% of the population (in many areas Catholicism and the indigenous religion are syncretised). The remaining includes a sizeable Protestant community as well as a small number of Bahai and Buddhist and even smaller Muslim groups.

The basis of Cape Verdian cuisine is Portuguese though the island was used as a testing ground to grow foods from the New World such as chillies, corn, pumpkins and cassava as well as Asian foods such as ananas, Sugar, mangos, and papayas. The cuisine therefore reflects the use of these foodstuffs. Semolina bread is a staple and West African-based stews are also common.

Cape Verdean Recipes

Carne Gizado (Stewed Meat and Vegetables)

Origin: Cape Verde **Period:** Traditional

Ingredients

- 2kg cubed beef or pork
- 1/2 tsp salt
- 3 garlic cloves, minced
- 120ml vinegar
- 1 bayleaf
- 1 tsp black pepper
- 1 chilli, pounded to a paste
- 4 white potatoes, cubed
- 1.4kg cassava root
- 3 medium white yams
- 3 green bananas or plantains
- 3 onions, chopped
- 120ml cooking oil

Preparation:

Mix together the salt, garlic, vinegar, bayleaf, black pepper and chilli and use to marinate the meat over night. Add the oil and onions to a large pot and fry until soft then add the meat and marinade and simmer gently until the meat is done. Add the chopped vegetables and cover with water. Bring to a boil, reduce to a simmer and cook for about 40 minutes, until the vegetables are done. Season with salt, paprika and pepper and serve.

Canja

Origin: Cape Verde **Period:** Traditional

Ingredients

1/2 chicken, cut into bite-sized pieces
2 medium onions, chopped
3 Maggi or chicken bouillon cubes
200g short-grain rice

Preparation:

Fry the onions in the oil until golden then add the chicken pieces, bouillon cubes and sufficient water to cover. Bring to a boil, reduce to a simmer and add the rice. Stirring occasionally, simmer for about 30 minutes or until the stew has thickened appreciably. Serve with an African hot sauce.

Cachupinha

Origin: Cape Verde **Period:** Traditional

Ingredients

corn kernels from 5 fresh corn cobs
100g smoked sausage
1/4 fresh squash, sliced
225g broad (fava) beans
2 ripe tomatoes, chopped
2 tbsp olive oil
6 crushed peppercorns
1 bunch coriander, chopped
1 large onion, sliced

Preparation:

Add the corn kernels into a pan. Meanwhile gently fry the onion, sausage and peppercorns in the olive oil. Add to the sweetcorn along with all the remaining ingredients and cover with water. Bring to a boil then reduce the heat and simmer for about 30 minutes, or until the vegetables have softened. Season with salt, sprinkle with chopped coriander and serve.

Cachupa Rica

Origin: Cape Verde **Period:** Traditional

Ingredients

800g samp (hominy)
200g kidney beans
200g lima beans
100g pinto beans
1 whole chicken, cut into serving pieces
900g pork or beef spareribs
1 chorizo, sliced
1 blood sausage or black pudding
100g lean bacon, diced
900g cabbage, coarsely chopped
900g tomatoes, quartered
900g green bananas or plantains, peeled and sliced
900g yams, peeled and cut into chunks
900g sweet potatoes, peeled and cubed
900g squash, peeled and cubed
1 onion, chopped
2 garlic cloves, peeled and chopped
2 bayleaves
handful of chopped coriander

Preparation:

Add the beans and samp to a bowl, cover with plenty of water and soak over night. The following day add 1.5l water to a large pot along with 2 tbsp olive oil, the onion, garlic and bayleaf. Bring to a boil and add the samp and beans. Cook the vegetables (except the tomatoes) in a separate pot, along with the meats (except chicken).

Season the chicken and fry in olive oil. Add the tomatoes to the pan and allow to simmer until the beans are almost tender (but not quite done). Now add the cooked vegetables and meats to the bean pot and allow to simmer for 20 minutes. Turn off the heat and allow to sit, covered, for half an hour before serving. Arrange the vegetables on a serving platter and place the meats on top. Garnish with the chopped coriander and serve.

Supida de Xerem

(Ground Corn with Vegetables and Meat)

Origin: Cape Verde **Period:** Traditional

Ingredients

1,8kg xerem (coarsely-ground maize)
2 butternut squashes, peeled and cubed
20 kale leaves, chopped
450g salted pork fat, diced
1.3kg pork meat, diced
900g dry beans (any kind)
4 medium onions, sliced
1/2 tsp salt
3 garlic cloves, minced
150ml vinegar
1 bayleaf
1 tsp black pepper
120ml groundnut oil

Preparation:

Allow the beans to soak in plenty of water over night. Form a marinade from the salt, garlic, vinegar, bayleaf and black pepper. Use this to marinate the pork over night. Wash the dry maize in warm water and soak for 2 hours before cooking (Add 1/4 onion for flavour).

The following day, drain the beans and add to a pot along with the pork. Cover with water and cook for about 90 minutes, or until the beans are almost soft. Drain the beans, but retain the water to cook the kale leaves until soft (About 20 minutes). Cook the ground corn in water until almost done (About 20 minutes).

Place the squash in the bottom of a large pot, then add the pork meat, kale, beans, onions and ground maize, forming layers. Add 120ml oil and 700ml water then cover with aluminium foil and place the lid on top. Cook on very low heat for 90 minutes then serve.

Xerem de Festa (A Feast Dish)

Origin: Cape Verde **Period:** Traditional

Ingredients

2kg xerem (coarsely-ground maize)
900g salt pork fat
4 medium onions

450g pork, cubed

Preparation:

Prepare the xerem by mixing with half the pork fat and 2 chopped onions. Cover with water and allow to soak over night. The following day place the remaining pork fat, onions and the pork meat into a large pot. Add the xerrem and sufficient water to cover. Bring to a boil, reduce to a simmer and cook, uncovered until all the water has been absorbed (About 40 minutes). Allow to cool a little and serve.

Polvo a Modo ze de Lino (Octopus Stew)

Origin: Cape Verde **Period:** Traditional

Ingredients

900g prepared octopus or squid, cut into small pieces
2 bayleaves
3 tbsp oil
2 tomatoes, chopped
2 garlic cloves
1 onion, finely chopped
2 hot chillies. pounded to a paste

Preparation:

Add the octopus, bayleaves and oil to a pot and cook on medium heat for about 20 minutes. Add the tomatoes, garlic, onion and chilli. Cook on medium heat until the vegetables soften and form a stew. Serve over rice.

Jagacinda (Beans and Rice)

Origin: Cape Verde **Period:** Traditional

Ingredients

2 tbsp oil
1 medium onion, sliced
600g rice
1 x 400g tin kidney beans
1 tbsp smoked paprika
2 bayleaves
salt and black pepper to taste

Preparation:

Fry the onions in the oil in a large pan until golden brown. Add 1.5l water along with the paprika and bayleaves. Season with salt and pepper, bring to a boil and add the rice. Lower the heat to a simmer then add the beans. Cover the pot and allow to simmer for 25 minutes, until the rice is cooked and all the water has been absorbed. Turn off the heat and allow the pot to stand for 10 minutes before serving.

Pudim de Queijo (Cheese Pudding)

Origin: Cape Verde **Period:** Traditional

Ingredients

450g soft goats' cheese
450g sugar
500ml water
12 egg yolks
4 egg whites

Preparation:

Grate the cheese as finely as possible then boil the sugar in the water until it forms a thick syrup. Add the cheese and mix thoroughly. Now remove the mixture from the heat and combine with the beaten egg yolks and egg whites.

Sprinkle the bottom of an oven-proof dish or bowl with burnt sugar. Pour the cheese mixture into this and cook in a bain marie (double boiler) until the custard thickens. Place in an oven pre-heated to 170°C and cook for 20 minutes, or until the top browns. Allow to cool, cut into cubes or slices and serve topped with granulated sugar.

