

Vacation Guide

A delicious fish story from Bermuda

By LEO J. CALLAHAN
HAMILTON, Bermuda - Don't get rumbled if, after you empty your bowl of Bermuda fish chowder, you ask for the recipe and only get a polite refusal.

Chances are, the cook won't part with the recipe, especially if it has been in the family for several generations. To give it away so frivolously would be tantamount to heresy.

Although Bermuda has no national dish, fish chowder is perhaps the closest thing to it. In fact, making good Bermuda-style fish chowder is serious business, at times even competitive to the point where some cooks hide the recipes so they won't get stolen.

Seemingly, every household has its own fish chowder recipe, each one calling for Bermuda onions, potatoes, carrots, celery and fish heads. The seasonings hardly differ - curry powder, cloves, thyme, bay leaves, clove garlic - but beyond that, each recipe goes its own way. And therein lies the secret because getting the right taste, the one that sets each concoction apart from all the rest, always requires a pinch of something extra. One of the island's European chefs freely admits that his pinch is cognac.

The signature of Bermuda fish chowder is always written with a few splashes of black rum and sherry pepper. Without them, Bermuda fish chowder really isn't well, Bermuda fish chowder.

The best part of it all is that Bermudians aren't given to selfishly hoarding their culinary creations. They might not readily give away those jealously guarded family recipes but they're quite wil-

ling, even eager, to share with visitors everything they whip up. In the case of local fish chowder, nearly every restaurant and out-of-the-way oasis serves it. Then, too, it's not unusual to hear a taxi driver singing the praises of his own fish chowder and then spontaneously invite you home for a cup of the stuff.

A word of advice: If such an invitation ever comes your way don't turn it down.

Another word of advice: Bermuda fish chowder isn't elegant looking so don't let

the looks of your first bowl discourage you. It's the taste you'll be after anyway, and that more than makes up for the untidiness.

There are other Bermuda dishes a visitor can try, too. One of the best liked is mussel pie: shucked mussels, potatoes and Bermuda onions, all coarsely ground, seasoned and thickened to stew consistency. The mixture is then wrapped in a pastry and baked.

Then there's conch stew. Similar in some respect to fish chowder, right down to

the splashes of black rum and sherry pepper, the stew's consistency is thicker and, needless to say, the taste is distinctively different.

Bermudians don't just steak their shark. They also hash it. The local recipe calls for only parsley and chopped hot bird peppers mixed with boiled shark meat. What gives the hash its consistency and unique taste is the shark liver oil, extracted and collected by frying the liver. Another of the less-pretty creations, shark hash might not easily be found on restaurant menus, but when it is it shouldn't be passed up.

Maybe the secret of the goodness of all the local dishes is the Bermuda onion; maybe not. Whatever the case, if you pass up the chance to partake of the few culinary creations Bermuda offers, you'll go home from the Union Patch shortchanged.



HAMILTON, BERMUDA - Princess Hotel executive chef, Guy Lecomte, is French but has learned the Bermudian art of fish chowder preparation. In a matter of hours this assortment of fish and vegetables will be reduced to a tangy chowder to set before the guests.

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Is what you have with this four bedroom bungalow, just ten minutes north of Georgetown. The three and one-third acre lot has young hardwood bush between you and the road. Seclusion plus privacy and comfortable country living. Call Arlene Shortill-Wannop for a personal viewing.
ROOM TO ROAM
In this spacious three bedroom bungalow on an acre lot just north of Ballinacraig. Main floor family room with angel stone fireplace and walk-out to cedar deck overlooking acres of open fields. Also has a main floor laundry room. All appliances included. Just listed, so don't lose your chance! Call now for a personal inspection and ask for Arlene Shortill-Wannop.
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Come and see this immaculate 3 bedroom semi which could be your home by spring. \$57,900. Call Eleanor Langdon.
10 ACRES - NEAR ACTON
Start your own mini farm, already approved for livestock and has 400 feet of highway frontage. Priced at \$54,500.00. Call Sandra Nairn for more details.
A LOT OF HEAVEN
In this executive home on a ravine lot in town. Four large bedrooms. Living room, family room and recreation room. ALL include fireplaces for your relaxing enjoyment. Walkouts to back yard and many more exciting extras! Call now for a personal viewing of the property and ask for Arlene Shortill-Wannop.
DOWNTOWN AND HIGHWAY COMMERCIAL
Contact John Caton for information on two separate land investment parcels. Highway 7 - 70 foot frontage and Main Street - 55 foot frontage.
THE HOME YOU HAVE EARNED \$74,900.00.
The unique brick arches at the front of this three bedroom bungalow make a very distinctive entrance. There is also a professionally finished recreation room and central air conditioning. Call Eleanor Langdon.
GORGEOUS DETACHED \$74,900.00
Nothing to do but move into this Georgetown gem. It's spacious and immaculate, features like main floor family room and mud room, finished rec room, kitchen walk-out and central air. Make it a must to see. Call Sandra Nairn for a personal inspection.
INCOME PROPERTY
Triplex with lots of parking, garage with pit for the "do-it" yourselfer and just five minutes to Brampton. Call Sandra Hurley for full details.
MORTGAGE AT 10 1/4 PER CENT
This lovely brick bungalow is sure to please with its new kitchen cupboards and counter, bright cherry dining area, separate living room with picture window, huge rec room with wet bar, extra bathroom and even a 4th bedroom and kitchenette off the rec room. Asking \$57,900.00. Call Sandra Nairn.
25 ACRES - \$75,000.00.
Highway 7 frontage. Recreational land in the Niagara Escarpment. Good for summer camp or ethnic group. Contact John Caton for more information.
"ADDED ATTRACTION THIS SUMMER"
Four bedrooms, 2 baths, main floor family room, den with fireplace, kitchen, living room and dining room. This home is a must to see, new wall to wall carpet last year and recently decorated. Enjoy all of these features now and appreciate the 16'x32' inground pool this coming July. Right! Call John Caton for all the information.
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