

Black-eyed Peas with Ham Hock and Collards

- 2 pounds black-eyed peas, soaked overnight if possible
- 2 pounds smoked ham hock, meaty ham bone or slab bacon
- 2 teaspoons kosher salt
- 1 large onion, peeled and stuck with 2 cloves
- 1 bay leaf
- ½ teaspoon black pepper
- ½ teaspoon allspice
- 2 tablespoons lard or vegetable oil
- 4 garlic cloves, minced
- ½ teaspoon crushed red pepper
- 2 pounds collard greens, cut in 1 inch ribbons (about 8 cups)
- 1 bunch scallions, cleaned and chopped, for garnish

Drain peas and put them in a large Dutch oven or heavy-bottomed soup pot. Add ham hock or bone (if using slab bacon, cut it into 2-inch chunks), cover with 10 cups water and turn heat to high. Add salt, onion stuck with cloves, bay leaf, black pepper and allspice.

Bring to a boil, then reduce heat to a gentle simmer. Skim off and discard any foam that rises to the surface. Simmer for 1 ½ to 2 hours, until peas are tender. Throughout cooking, add water as necessary, always keeping liquid level an inch above surface, stirring with wooden spoon occasionally. Turn off heat. Check broth for salt and adjust seasoning. Mixture should be fairly brothy. With a pair of tongs, remove ham hock, ham bone or bacon. Chop meat and skin into rough pieces and set aside.

Put a large wide skillet over medium-high heat. Add lard or vegetable oil and heat until wavy. Add garlic and red pepper and let sizzle without browning. Add collard greens and stir to coat. Season with salt and add 1 cup water, stirring to help wilt greens. Add chopped ham and reduce heat to medium, then cover with lid slightly ajar and cook until greens are soft, about 20 minutes. Check seasoning.

To serve, put greens and meat in low soup bowls, then ladle over hot black-eyed peas. Sprinkle with scallions.