Teresa- Food

Sun, 9/13 8:03AM • 6:24

**SUMMARY KEYWORDS**

cornbread, kush, white bread, grow, dishes, ingredients, making, molasses, colonial america, expensive, enslaved africans, native, colonists, little bit, eat, butter, lard, product, processed, unifier

00:04

Food is a universal necessity.

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Everyone has to eat to survive,

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but preparations, ingredients,

00:09

and access vary wildly

00:12

over the colonial period.

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In this we're going to show you

00:15

three different dishes that

00:16

highlight the differences

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in how people were eating

00:20

and what they were eating.

00:22

In this garden,

00:23

you'll see many plants.

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Some of them are native to America.

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Some of them come from faraway places.

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But ones we're going

00:29

to be talking about today are

00:30

corn, wheat, cinnamon and oysters.

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Some of the things

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that we'll be talking about is

00:35

who can access

00:36

these ingredients and why.

00:38

Corn is an edible cereal grain

00:40

in the grass family

00:40

that is native to the Americas.

00:43

Growing here long before the colonists

00:45

even set foot

00:46

and eaten by the indigenous peoples.

00:48

It became a staple grain

00:50

of the area when wheat

00:52

became easier to export

00:54

than it did to grow.

00:56

This is oysters and cinnamon.

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Cinnamon is native to Sri Lanka

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and is the bark of a tree.

01:00

It's very expensive

01:00

and takes a lot of time and effort to grow,

01:01

even before shipping over to the Americas.

01:02

It makes it expensive to the colonists

01:10

and only accessible to those

01:11

who are rich

01:12

and have the income to afford it.

01:15

The other is oysters.

01:16

Oysters are once again

01:18

native to the bay area,

01:19

and help filter out the water.

01:22

These would have grown in abundance

01:23

and been quite large

01:24

even for the time period,

01:26

making it free

01:27

and very easy for the colonists

01:28

to get their hands on.

01:29

The three dishes we'll be talking about today

01:32

are white bread,

01:32

cornbread and kush.

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We're going to go over

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the differences and the similarities

01:37

between these three things,

01:39

who was making them,

01:40

and why.

01:46

Here we're crumbling cornbread

01:47

to start making a dish called kush.

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Kush originates from Islamic West Africa,

01:53

and is a product of the adaptation

01:55

of enslaved Africans coming over here

01:57

and utilizing ingredients that were here

02:00

to make something

02:00

that was familiar to them.

02:02

Here we're cutting up sage,

02:04

rosemary and thyme to add

02:06

to the kush

02:07

to give it some flavoring.

02:08

The three herbs are quite common

02:10

and grow very easily in the gardens

02:11

of colonial America

02:13

and are referenced in quite

02:14

a few cookbooks of the time.

02:16

Next, we're going to

02:16

cut up some onions

02:18

to add to our kush.

02:20

These can be grown

02:21

in a garden

02:21

or they can also be forged wild.

02:24

Foraging is a great way

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to supplement the diets

02:27

of people living in colonial America,

02:29

but it can be dangerous

02:31

as if you don't know what you're looking for,

02:33

you can find poisonous plants

02:34

and this is even true for back then.

02:37

Next we're going to give this

02:38

a little bit of a stir

02:39

get that all mixed together

02:40

before we add some fat to the pan.

02:42

Here we're going to use butter

02:43

which is pretty common at the time

02:45

as it utilized any leftover milk

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that couldn't be consumed automatically.

02:49

Common fats were also pork fat,

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tallow, lard.

02:55

And then you're going to add

02:56

that to the pan

02:57

and let that cook

02:58

for a little bit to

03:00

get rid of any raw onion taste.

03:03

And last but not least

03:05

goes in chicken stock

03:06

to rehydrate the entire thing

03:08

as this is leftover cornbread

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that would have dried out

03:11

a little bit overnight.

03:13

And there you have kush,

03:15

this becomes dressing

03:17

if you're from the south

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and cornbread stuffing

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if you're from the north.

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Kush is something many enslaved Africans

03:23

would have had access to,

03:25

as it comes from day old cornbread,

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it would have been something

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that would have been given to them,

03:30

because it was cheap

03:31

and easy to sustain themselves with.

03:33

They're taking that

03:34

and they're making it into something new

03:36

and adapting to their surroundings,

03:38

creating something that is similar

03:39

to what is back home

03:41

but with ingredients that

03:42

they have access to

03:43

in an unfamiliar place.

03:49

White bread is something

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that not many classes of people

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had access to,

03:52

was typically reserved for the rich

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upper classes as white bread

03:57

is made of white flour

03:59

which is far more expensive

04:00

during the colonial periods.

04:02

White flour had to be processed differently,

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meaning it took a lot longer

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than whole wheat did

04:09

as it needed to be processed

04:11

and separated differently,

04:13

making it a lot more labor intensive

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and time consuming

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and a much more expensive product

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that not many could afford.

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To make this cornbread,

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we're going to use

04:26

cornmeal,

04:27

flour,

04:28

butter

04:28

and milk,

04:30

molasses and salt.

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To make this

04:35

we're going to combine

04:35

all the ingredients

04:36

into the bowl

04:37

and stir it until

04:38

it is nice and mixed.

04:41

One of the things

04:42

we're using to make

04:42

this cornbread is molasses,

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which is a byproduct

04:45

of the sugar making process.

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Molasses is much cheaper

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than sugar meaning

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it would be more easily accessible

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for the colonists

04:53

to get their hands on it.

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And for the enslaved Africans

04:56

that are in the area

04:57

to also use it

04:58

as it is the cheaper option.

05:00

And is much more

05:01

easily accessible for them.

05:08

Finally, we're gonna press

05:09

these into patties

05:10

and put them on

05:11

another hot cast iron

05:12

with a little bit of butter.

05:13

It could also be lard

05:15

and we're gonna let them

05:16

brown on one side

05:17

for a little bit.

05:22

So we put this back

05:23

on the fire

05:24

to let them get brown

05:25

and we're going to

05:25

flip them over

05:26

and let them cook

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on the other side.

05:29

You can also cook

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this in a loaf pan,

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which might be

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the way you are

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more accustomed

05:34

to seeing it

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when you make it at home

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or when you possibly

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see it in the store.

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Food can be

05:39

the greatest unifier among people.

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It has the ability

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to be the bridge

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that brings people back together

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and a source of comfort

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and familiarity

05:46

to those forced into unknown places

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far from their homes.

05:50

But with these three dishes,

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it was used to define the lines

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of class, gender, race

05:54

and social differences

05:55

during the colonial periods.

05:57

The three dishes you see

05:58

contain similar ingredients

06:00

and the early products

06:01

for modern foods we enjoy today.

06:03

Think about what you'll eat for dinner.

06:05

Think about your favorite foods

06:06

or what you make

06:07

for a special occasion.

06:08

And be curious

06:09

about where those foods came from.

06:11

Ask questions,

06:12

the answer may surprise you.