

**EASY SOUL FOOD**  
**HERITAGE RECIPES**



**5 Easy Recipes**  
**for Home Cooks**

By Kimberly D. Coleman

# Simple Deviled Eggs



You can take the girl out of the South but you can't take the South out of the girl. Although I live in NYC, I still tend to make deviled eggs for gatherings of friends or family. They are easy to make and consistent crowd pleasers. When people ask me how to make deviled eggs, they are often surprised at how easy it is to make them. The only thing that I don't like about deviled eggs is that they are hard to serve. You need a special plate so that they don't keep sliding all over the place!

*12 eggs*

*3 tbsp mayonnaise*

*1 tbsp mustard*

*1 tbsp sweet relish*

*salt and pepper to taste*

*paprika, for sprinkling*

1. Gently place the raw eggs in a pot filled with enough boiling water to cover the eggs. Let them boil for approximately 20 minutes. (You can check if the eggs are done at the 15-minute mark, by taking one out and seeing if it is cooked.)

2. Take the eggs out of the water and put them in a colander. Run cold water over the eggs to cool them down and then peel the eggs.
3. Cut the eggs in half. (The whites will hold the deviled egg filling.) Gently remove the yolks and place all of them in a separate bowl.
4. Add the mayonnaise, mustard and sweet relish to the egg yolks. Mix everything together until it reaches your desired creamy consistency.
5. Fill the egg whites with the yolk mixture. Lightly sprinkle the deviled eggs with paprika. That's it! You can eat them right away or lightly cover them and refrigerate until it is time to serve. (Personally, I prefer mine chilled.)

# 3-Cheese Baked Macaroni and Cheese

*Adapted from June 2011 issue of Ebony*



I have a confession to make. I grew up eating Kraft mac and cheese. My father-in-law thinks that I live this glamorous life – hobnobbing with celebrities and such. When my husband mentioned that my baked macaroni and cheese recipe was a variation of one that was made by Shaunie O’Neal (Shaq’s ex-wife), he assumed that she had given it to me at a blogger event. Nothing could be less true. I just found it in the June 2011 edition of *Ebony* magazine (page 120). Some people have issues with celebrities sharing recipes and such. Personally, I could care less where a recipe originates...as long as the resulting food is tasty. This one is. Everyone who has tasted it has enjoyed it. Reggie isn’t even a big mac and cheese fan and he loves it. Even Sean likes it! As my husband and father-in-law noted, “Shaq is a big dude. I’m sure that Shaunie does know how to cook!”

Here’s my updated version of Shaunie’s recipe. I just added more cheese and consolidated a couple of steps so that I wouldn’t have to wash extra dishes!

- 2 *tbps* butter (1 *tbsp* to butter casserole dish, 1 *tbsp* to dot mac & cheese)
- 1 *tbsp* vegetable oil
- 1 lb elbow macaroni
- 1 stick butter (room temperature)

- *2 cups shredded mild cheddar cheese*
- *2 cups shredded sharp cheddar cheese*
- *1 cup shredded Monterey jack cheese*
- *1 pint half-and-half*
- *2 lightly beaten large eggs*
- *seasoned salt and black pepper to taste*

1. Preheat the oven to 350°F. Lightly butter a 2 1/2 quart baking dish with 1 tablespoon of butter.
2. Bring a large pot of water to a boil over a high flame. When the water is boiled, add the vegetable oil and elbow macaroni. Follow the cooking directions on the macaroni package until it just becomes tender (approximately 7 minutes).
3. While the macaroni is cooking, mix all three shredded cheeses together in a medium bowl.
4. Drain the macaroni in a strainer. (Don't rinse!)
5. Return the cooked macaroni to the empty large pot. Stir in the stick of butter, the half-and-half, eggs, salt, pepper and 4 cups of the cheese mixture.
6. Pour the mixture into the baking dish. Sprinkle the last cup of cheese and "dot" the last tablespoon of butter on top.
7. Bake the macaroni and cheese until it bubbles around the edges (approximately 35 minutes).

## Grate's Great Collard Greens

*(Southern Collard Greens with Smoked Turkey Wings Recipe)*



I almost had my “Southern Girl” card revoked because I had forgotten how to make collard greens. The last time that I made collard greens from memory was over 15 years ago. I had a “soul food”-themed dinner at my home, and one of the guests was my friend (now husband) Reggie. One of my Japanese classmates was also there. She was enjoying my collard greens until she found out that they were seasoned with smoked turkey necks. I can remember her eyes getting big as she asked (to make sure that she had heard correctly) “Smoked turkey necks?” Yes girl...yes. Those greens were awesome!

Anyway, I have been eating canned collards (Glory or Sylvia's brands) from that time up until a couple of weeks ago. When I decided to include a collard greens recipe in this eBook, I set out to get the best one. I called my mom and she reminded me how we cook them. I was getting closer. Then, I remembered that my friend Theo is "friend-famous" for her collard greens. (Whenever there is a potluck, we all look forward to Theo's greens.) I asked her if she would share her collard greens with smoked turkey wings recipe with me and she did. Then, I asked if I could share her recipe with all of you and she was kind enough to agree to that also. Theo's last name is "Grate" so I dub these collards Grate's Great Collard Greens.

*3 lbs collard greens*

*1 smoked turkey wing (approximately 1.5 lbs)*

*1 tbsp salt*

*1 tsp white sugar*

*1 tbsp hot sauce (preferably Tabasco or Texas Pete's)*

1. Clean the greens by rinsing them well. Remove the stems and chop or tear the greens.
2. Fill a large pot with 3 quarts of water and add the turkey wing to the pot.
3. Bring to a boil. Cover the pot and cook the meat over a medium heat for 2 hours. (The meat should easily come off the bone.)
4. Remove the turkey meat and bones from the pot, leaving the seasoned water behind. Set meat aside.
5. Add the salt, sugar and hot sauce to the seasoned water. Stir, and add the boneless turkey meat back into the pot.
6. Place the collards in the pot and let them boil over a medium-high heat for 5 minutes. Stir occasionally to prevent collards from sticking to the pot.
7. Cover the pot and let the greens simmer over a low heat for 45 minutes to an hour, stirring occasionally.
8. Once the greens are cooked, drain the liquid before serving.
  - Many southern folks save the leftover liquid from the greens. (We call it "pot liquor".)
  - Whatever you do, don't let the collards burn. As my mom says, "The worst taste is burnt collard greens!"
  - Collard greens are best when they are served the day **after** they are prepared.
  - Lastly, once the greens are cooked, you can season them to your taste. Add a little seasoning at a time. Personally, I like to serve my collards with vinegar as an option on the side. Other people like to add onions, garlic, and pepper. The great thing about a basic recipe (like this one) is that you can adjust it to your family's preference.

## Southern Pan Fried Chicken Recipe



Ask ten different people (with southern roots) how to cook fried chicken and you'll probably get ten different answers. Some use an egg wash while others don't. Some put a cover on the frying pan while the chicken fries while others don't. The truth is that we're all right, because it's based on how you like your final chicken prepared. I have used an egg wash. It makes the chicken have a thicker, crispy batter but honestly, it doesn't make that much of a difference so I usually skip it. I have also fried chicken with a cover on top. It does make the chicken a little bit more tender and juicy. I like my chicken crispy on the outside and juicy on the inside though, so I usually cook my fried chicken uncovered. My family and friends enjoy this special treat and I hope that yours will too!

*Yield: 4-6 servings*

*1 lb chicken (thighs and legs), cut into pieces*

*2 cups all-purpose flour*

*oil for frying (some people swear by Crisco, lard or peanut oil, but I just use vegetable oil)*



*seasoned salt and black pepper*

1. Season the raw chicken pieces on both sides
2. Cover the seasoned chicken with flour. (I place flour in a bag and shake a few pieces of chicken in it at a time until they are thoroughly covered with flour.)
3. Season the floured chicken pieces on both sides.
4. Fill a frying pan 1/2 way with oil and heat it over a medium flame. (You will know that the oil is ready for frying the chicken when you can “bounce” a couple of drops of water off it.)
5. Using tongs, place the chicken in the oil and allow it to fry for 15-20 minutes over a medium heat. Turn the chicken over and fry it for another 15-20 minutes on the other side over a medium heat. Cut a slit into the thickest piece of chicken to make sure that it is thoroughly cooked. (Bloody fried chicken is the worst!)
6. When the chicken is finished frying, place it on a plate covered with paper napkins. (The napkins will absorb the excess oil, so that the fried chicken won't be too “greasy”.)
  - The length of time that you fry your chicken depends on how soft or crisp your family enjoys it. As I mentioned before, I like my fried chicken crispy on the outside and juicy on the inside, so I usually let my chicken cook for 20 minutes on each side. Just make sure it's actually cooked.

## “Not Too Sweet” Southern Sweet Potato Pie



Sweet potato pie was one of my favorite desserts that Big Mama made when I was a child. I started making my own version five years ago. It is close to the pie of my childhood memories. I don't like super heavy or sweet desserts though, so my version has less butter, sugar, and milk. This “not too sweet” pie is still a hit. In fact, it is the most requested dessert from my father-in-law. Since he was born and raised in the South himself, I consider this an honor.

*1.5 lbs sweet potato*

*6 tbsp butter, room temperature*

*1/2 cup white sugar*

*1/4 cup milk*

*2 large eggs*

*1/2 tsp ground nutmeg*

*1/2 tsp ground cinnamon*

*1 tsp vanilla extract*

*1 (9-inch) unbaked pie crust*

1. Preheat the oven to 350°F.

2. Microwave the entire sweet potato in its skin until it is soft (approximately 10 minutes). Pour cold water over the sweet potato and gently remove the skin off the potato.
3. In a large bowl, mash the sweet potato with a potato masher. (No mixer is necessary.) Add the butter, sugar, milk, eggs, nutmeg, cinnamon and vanilla. Mash everything together until the mixture is smooth. Using a large spoon, scrape the sides and bottom of the bowl to make sure that everything is well mixed.
4. Use a small spoon to taste the sweet potato mixture to see if it is at your desired sweetness and consistency. If not, feel free to add additional sugar, butter, and milk to taste.
5. Pour the pie filling into an unbaked pie crust. Bake the pie for one hour. (When you insert a knife into the middle of the pie, it should come out clean.)
  - You can serve the pie warm with whipped cream or ice cream if you like. Personally, I prefer to cool the pie at room temperature for 1 hour and refrigerate it for a few hours before serving.

I hope that you have enjoyed these 5 recipes. For more easy soul food recipes, please check out my new eBook, [\*Soul Food: 31 Easy Recipes for Home Cooks\*](#).



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