

Jewish Soul Southern Collard Greens

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I grew up with my Southern-born grandma, Bubbie Charlotte's, flavorful slow-stewed collard greens as a regular side dish on the Friday night Sabbath table, accompanying the roast chicken (gedempte hin), buckwheat kasha, and sweet potato and carrot tzimmes. And I can tell you there is nothing quite like the aroma of collard greens simmering away on the stove for hours to make a Southern boy smile.

Collards are a staple of American Southern cuisine and are typically served as a festive food for the secular New Year, along with black-eyed peas. My family traditionally serves collards (as well as black-eyed peas) on Rosh Hashanah. They are served as a siman (a symbolic food of good omen) of wealth in the coming year, the collards representing greenbacks (i.e. cash currency).

Collards are typically prepared in the south by stewing the greens in chicken or beef broth, along with smoked ham-hocks (we use a smoked turkey leg for our kosher version=**KEY SECRET INGREDIENT**), marrow bones, onions and garlic, vinegar, sugar, and red pepper flakes. The stewing liquid is known as '**pot liquor**' and should be consumed with the collards and/or reserved for future cooking, as it contains much of the collards' nutrients lost (or transferred in this case) during the cooking process. The best way to enjoy the pot liquor is to soak it up with some fresh cornbread. Ain't nothing like BBQ chicken, collard greens, black-eyed peas, and some hot cornbread.

Meat

Serves 10-12

- 3-4 lb. bunch of fresh Collard Greens (about 4-5 cups) and bring to a boil. Reduce to low heat and simmer for 2 1/2-3 hours, or until meat pulls easily from the bone.
- 1 1 lb. Aaron's Smoked Turkey Leg, with skin and bone Remove from broth and cut meat from the bone. Set aside.
- 2-3 Marrow Bones
- 4-5 cups Water, to cover
- 2 tablespoons White Vinegar
- 2-3 cloves fresh Garlic, minced
- 3 large Yellow Onions, quartered and sliced
- 3 heaping tablespoons Granulated White Sugar
- 1 teaspoon Sea Salt, to taste
- 1/4 teaspoon Ground Black Pepper
- 1 teaspoon Red Pepper flakes
- 1 teaspoon Smoked Paprika

While turkey leg is cooking, rinse collards; cut the collard leaves from the center rib and cut leaves into about 2-3-inch pieces. Dispose of the rib. Return turkey meat to broth. Add collards, garlic, red pepper, sugar, salt, pepper, paprika, and vinegar. Bring to a boil. Reduce heat to low, and simmer, covered, for 2 1/2 to 3 hours, or until collards are tender. Season with salt and pepper, and adjust seasonings and vinegar, to taste. Serve with hot sauce.

In a large stock pot, cover smoked turkey leg, marrow bone and onions with water