

## Shirley Wright

Cou-cou is not as many Barbadians call it "cuckoo" as in cuckoo clock or cuckoo bird. The correct pronunciation is kuh-coo. It is made from other dishes such as green banana or breadfruit. Cou-cou simply means "mashed", after the manner of mashed potatoes. We Barbadians call them creamed potatoes. I do like this dish. Here's how to make it!

**Cornmeal Cou-Cou** (can be combined with steamed flying fish. This is the Barbadian national dish).

*2 cups of very fine cornmeal*  
*12 or more okra (ladies' fingers)*  
*6 cups of water*  
*2 tsp salt*  
*Butter*



Sift cornmeal and salt together into a large saucepan. Stir in 4 cups of water. Then mix it well and leave to soak (cornmeal will sink to bottom). Wash okra, remove taps and tips and cut into quarter slices. Then boil with remaining 2 cups of water, cooking until tender, but not mushy. Drain reserving okra water (which will be texture of egg white). Stir okra into meal and cook over medium heat. You need to stir constantly, turning mixture from bottom over top and scrape around the sides of saucepan. When the meal is quite thick add a portion of okra water and resume stirring until the meal thickens again. Repeat these two steps. The liquid must be fully absorbed each time, but all liquid may not be needed.

Cou-cou is made when the mixture pulls away from the bottom and sides of the saucepan. Now you can turn off the heat and leave cou-cou covered to mellow for 10-15 mins. Serve the mixture into a hot bowl, smooth top with butter and cover to keep hot. Then serve with the steamed flying fish.

### Steamed Flying Fish

*12-18 boned flying fish (or other small white fish e.g. herrings)*  
*3-4 limes*  
*Salt*  
*3-4 sliced onions*  
*4-6 tbsp of bajan seasoning mixture*  
*2 tsp dry mustard*  
*1 tbsp cider vinegar*  
*3 tbsp of plain flour*  
*4 tbsp butter/margarine*  
*3 tomatoes*  
*3 cups of water*

Marinate the fish in lime juice and salt for 15 minutes. Drain, rinse well and spread seasoning mix into the lines from which the bones were removed. Starting at the tail, roll up each fish neatly and secure with toothpick. Make a thick bed of onions in the bottom of a steaming pan. Combine all sauce ingredients and stir well. Arrange fish on onions. Pour the sauce slowly into the pan and simmer gently for 15 minutes. Present the fish in a shallow dish or platter with sauce, garnish with lime wedges and parsley. That's it! Serve this with cou-cou.