



# **Beyond Gumbo: Creole Fusion Food from the Atlantic Rim**

*Jessica B. Harris*

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For most Americans, Creole cooking is permanently and exclusively linked to the city of New Orleans. But Creole food is more than the deep, rich flavors of Louisiana gumbo. In reality, its range encompasses foods spread across the Atlantic rim. From Haiti to Brazil to Barbados, Creole cooking is the original fusion food, where African and European and Caribbean cuisine came together in the Americas.

In *Beyond Gumbo*, culinary historian and critically acclaimed cookbook author Jessica B. Harris has brought together 150 of these vibrant recipes from across the Americas, accompanied by cultural and historical anecdotes and illustrated with beautiful antique postcards.

Creole cuisine incorporates many elements, including composed rice dishes, abundant hot sauces, dumplings and fritters, and the abundant use of fresh vegetables and local seafood. In Creole cuisine you might find vanilla borrowed from the Mexican Aztecs combined with rice grown using African methods and cooked using European techniques to produce a rice pudding that is uniquely Creole. Harris uses ingredients available in most grocery stores and by mail order that will allow any home cook to re-create favorite dishes from numerous countries.

From Puerto Rico's tangy *lechón asado* to Charleston's Red Rice, from Jamaica, New York, to Jamaica, West Indies, Harris discovers the secrets of this true fusion cuisine. Mouthwatering recipes such as Corn Stew from Costa Rica, Aztec Corn Soup from Mexico, Scallop *Cebiche* from Peru, Baxter's Road Fried Chicken from Barbados, Roast Leg of Pork from Puerto Rico, Mashed Sweet Potatoes with Pineapple from the United States, and six different gumbo recipes will lead you to the kitchen again and again. Sweets and confections are an essential part of Creole cooking, and Harris includes delectable dessert recipes such as Lemon-Pecan Pound Cake from the United States, Three-Milk Flan from Costa Rica, Rice Fritters from New Orleans, and Rum Sauce from Barbados.

To complete the fusion experience, sample drink recipes such as Banana Punch from Barbados and Lemon Verbena Iced Tea from New Orleans. Tastes that are as bright as tropical sunshine are hallmarks of this international cooking of the Creole world.

With a comprehensive glossary of ingredients and lists of mail-order sources, *Beyond Gumbo* will transport you to kitchens throughout the Americas and take you on a culinary journey to the roots of Creole cuisine.

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