

Shaunda Necole [00:00:00]:

Hello, you Beautiful Souls. Today we're talking all about cookout food, specifically Black cookout food. So I always say, if Black folks' Southern fried chicken is Michael Jackson, Black folks' potato salad is Prince.

Shaunda Necole [00:00:14]:

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Shaunda Necole [00:01:50]:

Now, Black cookouts are a tradition in which African Americans celebrate by gathering for a meal and spending time with family and friends. An outside gathering featuring a menu of soul food favorite dishes. At the center of it all is the love poured into the cookout food menu, often with a focus on the barbecue and slow cooked soul foods. Black cookouts have taken on many different names and themes, from family reunions to church potlucks, and even elevated all white attire parties.

Shaunda Necole [00:02:22]:

But the key factors that define a cookout are the relaxing, come as you are, fun loving affair. And the host will tell you that you don't need to worry about anyone helping clean up. Just relax, grab a plate and stay for a while. So what foods are at a Black cookout? Whether you know it or

not, a typical Black family cookout menu is based on a tried and true soul food formula. You can bet that ribs, fried chicken, potato salad, mac and cheese, and collard greens will be front and center. And don't forget the homemade cornbread. Now, what you may not realize is that is that the way those dishes are prepared impacts whether it's a good cookout or not. This is why a Black cookout food menu matters. Now, maybe you've only had fried chicken with a side of mashed potatoes at a cookout. That's because you were not at a Black folks cookout. Likely you were at a picnic at a Black folks gathering. That type of menu is all wrong. There's more than one way to serve chicken and what to serve it with. You may have never had collard greens at a cookout, but I can assure you that once you do, no one will be able to stop you from reaching for seconds. Many different foods are served at a Black cookout. The food can be pretty diverse with various West African and African American influences. So backed by popular demand is my mom, Mama (Ma-Ma) Mary, and she's here to tell us more about her favorite Black cookout family food traditions. So Mama, what are your favorites?

Ma-Ma Mary [00:03:53]:

Hi, everyone. My favorites are, I guess, ribs, pull, pork, baked beans, potato salad, of course, corn on the cob, dessert, peach cobbler. That's some of them. And pickin cake. I think I really like that.

Shaunda Necole [00:04:18]:

Yes. Peach cobbler. You said banana pudding, right?

Ma-Ma Mary [00:04:21]:

I did not, but that is a favorite.

Shaunda Necole [00:04:23]:

Okay, banana pudding. And I know I heard you mention pig pickin cake. All right, let's talk a little about pig pickin cake, Beautiful Souls. Do you all know about Southern pig pickinn cake? Like, what is pig pickin cake? So, not to be confused with a pig birthday cake, a Peppa the Pig Cake, or pig cupcakes for that matter, a Southern soul food, pig pickin cake is a moist yellow cake with sweet mandarin oranges baked into the cake. It's been covered with a fluffy whipped cream frosting full of crushed pineapples. Pig pickin cake. Pig pickin cake is a simple dump cake recipe with a hint of vanilla extract and mellow sweetness. The pineapple in the frosting gives it a sweet citrusy flavor, and the whipped cream makes it light and fluffy. The cake is then topped with Mandarin oranges to garnish. So in essence, pig, Pig and cake is a one-of-a-kind cake.

As unique as its name, which is a tongue twister pig, pig and cake. And it's also the official dessert of Southern pig roast and pig pickens. Which begs the question, why is it called pig pickin cake? Well, it's not because it's made with pork or anything from the pig I just described. It's got Mandarin orders of pineapples. So what is pig pickin cake and where did it come from?

Unique name for this cake originated from the Southern barbecue tradition called pig pickens. Mama, you know about those from North Carolina? Sure. Pig pickens, yes. Okay, so you Beautiful Souls may ask, if you're not from the Deep South, what is a Southern pig pickin? At a pig pickin, a whole pig is cooked and served as guests gather and pick the tender meat from the roasted pig. Folks also bring their favorite potluck dishes and desserts to the pig picking events. Pig pickin cake was singled out as a favorite dessert amongst all the potluck cake testers from the potluck dessert dishes. Thus the name pig pickin cake. Did you know that?

Ma-Ma Mary [00:06:23]:

I did not.

Shaunda Necole [00:06:27]:

Little Southern history for you Beautiful Souls, and I taught mama something, so go figure. So what is usually served at a soul food cookout other than pig pickin cake? Of course, if you're in the Deep South. So a cookout is a social gathering where delicious food is the party's centerpiece. But what foods are good for a cookout? And what should you bring to a Black barbecue? These are the most common foods you'll find on a Black cookout menu. And I don't know, Beautiful Souls. If you all can hear, it's a lawn mower blowing in our background here. It's making me feel like we are like getting ready for a cookout. All right, here we go. These are the most common foods you'll find. Barbecue meats, Southern soul food, baked beans, southern pulled barbecue Black folks, coleslaw. Soul food, barbecue chicken, Southern soul food, fried chicken, soul food, macaroni salad, watermelon salad Southern corn salad, Southern pasta with Italian dress, Italian dressing, soul food, deviled egg, soul food, burger, soul food, collard greens, Black folks, macaroni and cheese. Grilled corn on the cob, soul food, homemade cornbread Southern fruit salad, soul food, sweet potato pie, of course, Black folks, banana pudding, Southern soul food, pig pickin cake, and, of course, Black folks potato salad. All right, let's talk about Black folks' potato salad because it is a whole thing all by itself. All right, I'm going to try and break this down. So Black folks' Southern potato salad is a must have for any Black cookout, family reunion, picnic or potluck. It's a creamy yet tangy dressing balanced by soul food, seasonings and flavors. Most Southerners have their family recipe for potato salad, and there are different versions of it all over the south. On TheSoulFoodPot.com we share my mom's, Ma-Ma's recipe that calls for main ingredients rusted potatoes, hard boiled eggs, sweet pickles, sweet onion and celery. Amongst a host of flavorful seasonings. It's a favorite among children and adults alike. You could also add optional condiments that are personal favorites like chopped bell pepper, garlic powder, red onion or green onion. But absolutely no raisins in Black folks' potato salad. Glee?

Ma-Ma Mary [00:08:40]:

Not at all.

Shaunda Necole [00:08:40]:

Right.

Shaunda Necole [00:08:46]:

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Shaunda Necole [00:09:41]:

So what is a Black folks' potato salad recipe? Simply answered, it's flavorful. The same way one of my besties is Persian. So the same way Persian people feel about their beloved fesenjan recipe. Also, you can find that recipe on TheSoulFoodPot.com is also how Black folks cherish soul food potato salad. So I always say, if Black folks Southern fried chicken is Michael Jackson, Black folks' potato salad is Prince. Its fans are die-hard. People will wait in line for Black folks' potato salad. And if it were to ever die, people would mourn it for months, if not years. So all of what I mentioned just might be lost on you. So let me explain a little bit further. Okay? So Black folks potato salad versus white potato salad. People often ask, what is Southern potato salad? So Southern food can be described as down south home-cooked comfort food recipes where you can taste the hospitality. But soul food goes way beyond Southern cooking, which sparks the conversation about Black potato salad versus white potato salad. Google it. It's a thing, a discussion about why Black people distrust potato salad, recipes prepared by hands that are not Brown. So don't believe me. Like I said, it's a real thing. And a whole article dedicated to the conversation on The Root, which is the article is why we don't trust white people's potato salad, backed by SNL. Lord SNL. Saturday Night Live. Black Panther, may he rest in peace, King T'Challa So have you seen that skit?

Ma-Ma Mary [00:11:14]:

I have seen that skit, but I don't remember the Black folks' potato salad.

Shaunda Necole [00:11:19]:

Okay.

Ma-Ma Mary [00:11:20]:

I must have gone to the bathroom or something.

Shaunda Necole [00:11:22]:

All right, so it is in the part where King T'Challa is a guest on Black Jeopardy. And the question or I guess the answer given, because, remember, you have to say the question in Jeopardy. Is about potato salad and kind of who made it. It's a whole thing about the raisins and the potato salad. So we'll watch the skit afterwards and actually, Beautiful Souls in our Black folks potato salad recipe on TheSoulFoodPot.com, it is linked to the SNL skit, and it's hilarious. You have to see it. So it's the flavor and seasoning that if it's flavor and seasoning that you're seeking, then it's a Black folks potato salad recipe that you want it's tried true, full of flavor, and exactly what you came looking for. So you might ask, since it's so flavorful, what goes into Black folks Southern potato salad? So a classic soul food Southern potato salad dish consists primarily of potatoes, hard boiled eggs, pickles celery, and onion with a dressing of mayonnaise or Miracle whip, whichever one you prefer to use. That's another debate we'll have at another time, but also mustard and then various seasonings. There are many ways to season the dressing, and some recipes include relish, pickles horseradish or even hot dogs. So let's play a fun game.

Ma-Ma Mary [00:12:32]:

All right?

Shaunda Necole [00:12:33]:

Okay. A game of Black cookout food. Would you rather have you played would you rather before?

Ma-Ma Mary [00:12:38]:

No, I haven't.

Shaunda Necole [00:12:39]:

Okay, that's good enough. So this way of playing would you rather? I love this game. They played on the Steve Harvey Morning Show every morning. And speaking of Steve Harvey, check out TheSoulFoodPot.com for Uncle Steve's homemade barbecue sauce recipe. It's a great recipe. Really popular around Memorial daytime. Okay, so the game goes like this. At a cookout, would you rather have potato salad or macaroni salad?

Ma-Ma Mary [00:13:04]:

Goat potato salad.

Shaunda Necole [00:13:06]:

Okay. Would you rather have baked beans or coleslaw?

Ma-Ma Mary [00:13:10]:

I'd really rather have both, but I'll pick baked beans.

Shaunda Necole [00:13:17]:

Wow. I'm surprised because North Carolina Carolinians usually pick coleslaw, but okay, bake me. You're going coleslaw. It's not both?

Ma-Ma Mary [00:13:24]:

Yeah.

Shaunda Necole [00:13:25]:

Okay. Because, you know, you can layer a pool pork sandwich with chick. Pool pork or pool chicken with coleslaw. And I've even seen people put baked beans on the sandwich, too.

Ma-Ma Mary [00:13:35]:

That would be good.

Shaunda Necole [00:13:36]:

Right? So gumbo or seafood shrimp boil?

Ma-Ma Mary [00:13:39]:

Seafood shrimp boil.

Shaunda Necole [00:13:41]:

Okay. Banana pudding or peach cobbler?

Ma-Ma Mary [00:13:44]:

Again, both.

Shaunda Necole [00:13:45]:

Okay. I know, it's so hard. These questions are really hard. I would pick banana pudding, but it's so hard. Okay. Would you rather have collard greens or Southern fried cabbage?

Ma-Ma Mary [00:13:59]:

Collard greens.

Shaunda Necole [00:14:00]:

Okay. Would you rather have pool barbecue or pulled? Excuse me? Would you rather have pool pork barbecue or pool chicken barbecue?

Ma-Ma Mary [00:14:08]:

I'd rather have pool pork barbecue.

Shaunda Necole [00:14:10]:

Okay. The old fashioned original way?

Ma-Ma Mary [00:14:12]:

Yes.

Shaunda Necole [00:14:12]:

Okay. Barbecue ribs or barbecue chicken ribs. Okay. Would you rather have, at a cookout, pork ribs or beef ribs? I don't eat a lot of pork.

Ma-Ma Mary [00:14:27]:

So at a cookout, I would rather have the pork ribs.

Shaunda Necole [00:14:30]:

Okay. So you can splurge on cookout. Would you rather have cornbread or hush puppies?

Ma-Ma Mary [00:14:37]:

Hush puppies. That's my family favorite.

Shaunda Necole [00:14:40]:

Okay. And yes, hush puppies definitely remind me of North Carolina. And then lastly, at a cookout, would you rather have hot sauce or barbecue sauce?

Ma-Ma Mary [00:14:48]:

Barbecue sauce.

Shaunda Necole [00:14:49]:

Okay. Yeah, barbecue sauce is strictly cooked. It's cookout flavorful. Right. And you can't cook out without barbecue sauce. I don't think that yeah. Okay. So, mama, have you ever heard this question, who made the potato salad?

Ma-Ma Mary [00:15:04]:

All the time.

Shaunda Necole [00:15:05]:

All right, I probably break this one down. So if you're African American, you're all too familiar with this question about potato salad. The question could also be asked this way who brought the potato salad? In essence, what we're trying to get to the bottom of is this who made the potato salad at the cookout? Why is that important? Let me break down from the Black cookout potato salad. I told you, potato salad is a whole thing unto itself. So I'm going to break down the Black cookout potato salad rules. Okay, here we go. You see, in a Black family, you have to earn the right to bring this iconic Black folks' recipe potato salad. Black people will ask the who, what, when, where, and why about potato salad? Who brought it to a large gathering like a cookout or a holiday event, because it's sacred and it's a protected dish. It ain't called Black folks potato salad for nothing. So what's special about Black America's potato salad? Soul food is all about seasoning to perfection. The flavor, again, the same holds true for Black folk, southern potato salad. So, mama, who taught you how to make your famous potato salad recipe?

Ma-Ma Mary [00:16:13]:

My mother taught me. And I also watched my grandmother, and they did the Black folks saying they put their foot in it.

Shaunda Necole [00:16:24]:

Okay. They put their foot in. That's how we say it. Okay, so you're saying from same thing I always say, from grandma to mom to me, and now to you, Beautiful Souls. And so the same



goes for you, from grandma to mom to you, then to me and to the Beautiful Souls. But clearly there is again a formula and a system to how we make these recipes that you just don't like, start making up stuff and doing this.

Ma-Ma Mary [00:16:47]:

No, you don't. There is a formula. It's almost science.

Shaunda Necole [00:16:50]:

Right? Okay. Scientific science. I love that. I love that. It's almost science. Okay. So, Beautiful Souls, are you a fan of potato salad? So according to The Root's spot-on piece, *Why Black People Care So Damn Much About Potato Salad? Explained*, there are so many different ways to part of my French ef-up a batch of potato salad because it involves so many different ingredients and there are so many different ways to make it. So you cannot boil the potatoes too long or cut them into big-a chunks. You can add too much or too little mayo or mustard. Like we just said, there's a science to how to do this. And when you're talking cookout soul food cookout, it starts with the potato salad. So now we want to know what are the top three foods that you have to have at your family's cookout? So let us know in the comments below. And I can't wait to read that conversation. Me too. All right, well, we might as well do this before we go. What are your top three that you have to have at your family cookout?

Ma-Ma Mary [00:17:52]:

Potato salad, of course. I like the pool pork and baked beans.

Shaunda Necole [00:17:59]:

Okay. All right. I'm going to go with banana pudding, obviously. Potato salad. And I'm going to need that barbecue chicken. Barbecue chicken, please. All right, till next time, you Beautiful Souls. Remember that food for the body is not enough. There must be food for the soul.

Shaunda Necole [00:18:22]:

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