

## **Episode 18: New Year's Soul Food Recipes**

Beautiful Souls!

Are you looking for a delicious, soulful way to bring good luck into your life this New Year?

Then you're in the right place to start with my New Year's soul food guide and menu ideas!

No need to wait to consume good fortune and prosperity.

So let's dive right into these soulful traditions and recipes!

**Welcome to The Soul Food Pod!**

**The first soul food podcast about Southern soul food.**

**I'm your host, Shaunda Necole, cookbook author and food and lifestyle blogger.**

**Making life easier plus more soulful, one recipe at a time.**

**What makes me an expert on authentic soul food?**

**My heritage dates back to my great-grandmother Florence, a highly esteemed North Carolinian one-woman catering queen.**

**In honor of my Grandma Florence's legacy, I run the world's number-one soul food website today.**

**I'm a born and raised Southern girl living my best life in the fabulous entertainment and food capital of the world, Las Vegas.**

**I'm so proud to share my family's African American soul food recipes representing our beautiful people and a legacy of what we eat.**

**My mission here on The Soul Food Pod is to provide you with recipes for success.**

**So join me as I create conversations about how accessible and approachable classic Southern soul food recipes can be.**

**I'll teach you how these iconic recipes are now easy enough for anyone to make and everyone to love you.**

**What traditions do Black folks have on New Year's Day?**

African Americans, especially in the deep South, insist that good luck on New Year's Day starts with a man being the first visitor to come to your door.

A man. Not a woman.

I dunno why?

But my mother-in-law tells a heart-warming and nostalgic story of her neighbor, Mr. Frank, who made his annual 7 am round to ring her doorbell every New Year's Day.

Like a good neighbor (and no, Mr. Frank did not work for State Farm), Mr. Frank intentionally made it a point to be the first person to greet her at her door.

"Happy New Year!" he'd say to usher in the Southern tradition of good luck!

Mr. Frank did this for years. Even after my mother-in-law moved out of the same neighborhood!

He continued to usher in good luck for her all the way until the year he passed away.

There are many African-American New Year's soul food traditions. We'll touch on the ones I'm familiar with today.

Even more Southern traditions include starting the New Year with a prosperous meal.

For Black folks, that begins with black-eyed peas, cornbread, collard greens (or mix 'em both with rice for Hoppin John), and ham or pork jowl.

### **Why do African Americans eat black-eyed peas?**

Black-eyed peas are a New Year's supper tradition enjoyed by many Southerners and Black folks with the idea that this meal will usher in prosperity for the New Year.

Legend has it that the Union Army came across standing fields of black-eyed peas before Sherman's March, winning the Civil War.

After that, black-eyed peas symbolized abundance and emancipation for African Americans freed on New Year's Day post-war.

But, unfortunately, this story is more fanciful than fact.

Juneteenth's history reveals many truths about our ancestors' emancipation taking much longer.

### **Why do people eat pork jowl on New Year's Day?**

#### **But first - I bet you're asking what is pork jowl?**

Pork jowl bacon comes from the fattier cheeks of the pig. It's the true fatback!

While pork jowls are used in meals and recipes throughout the year, this dish is highlighted on New Year's as a deep South tradition, especially among Black people.

Legend believes that pork on New Year's will usher in good fortune and prosperity since pigs forge in a forward direction.

So, the wish is for the New Year to move you forward too!

Some folks even believe that the bigger the pig (, the more pork you eat on New Year's), the fatter your purse will become – like the pig!

Have you ever eaten pork jowl bacon?

Whether you've eaten it already, or this delicacy is new to you, you'll wanna "slap yo mama!" (But, please don't!) once you have pork jowl bacon, The Soul Food Pot way. Also known as million-dollar bacon!

Million-dollar pork jowl is our Instagram viral recipe, and all you need is thick-cut bacon, maple syrup, brown sugar, black pepper, cayenne pepper, and red pepper flakes to perfect this easy Southern delicious treat!

For your convenience, the recipe link is in this episode's description. (You're welcome!)

**Do you want to make the most flavorful and delicious vegetables and meats?  
Do you have the most flavorful seasonings in your pantry or on your spice rack?  
No worries if you don't have the answers to these questions.  
I've gotchu with my step-by-step digital printable guides to take your taste buds to new heights!  
I put together a collection of the best African American seasonings and spices recipes passed along from my grandma to mom to me.  
And now to you in my easy step-by-step cookbooks and guides of all that's flavorful with these ultimate lists for soul food seasonings and how to season Southern fried chicken.  
Grab them from [ShaundaNecoleShop.com](https://ShaundaNecoleShop.com)  
Also linked for your convenience in the episode description.**

What about this next New Year's recipe?

### **Have you heard of soul food Hoppin John?**

Black folks' Hoppin' John is a dish that will tantalize your taste buds with its mix of Southern soul food and African-American flavors.

Adding cooked black-eyed peas and collard greens to rice makes it a whole comforting meal.

The black-eyed peas are cooked to perfection in the exquisite Black folks' soul food seasoning.

The seasoning gives this dish its unique flavor profile, and the collards and rice add texture and a delicious bite.

Hoppin John is a must-have dish for nutrient-rich, hearty, and delicious comfort food. Filled with Creole seasoning and herbs, this dish is sure to warm your soul!

During the colder months, Hoppin John is incredibly comforting. Especially since this dish is very popular in January during New Year's.

### **Where did the name Hoppin John come from?**

There are a many tales down South as to how this Carolina rice and peas recipe got its legendary name.

One story suggests that while the rice and peas were cooking, little kids in the house began *hopping* around in anticipation of the good eats.

Another tells the tale of a man named John, who started jumping with joy about his wife stewing up a hot pot full of rice, collards, and black-eyed peas.

Was John the dad that came home to the kids *hoppin* around?

Was John's nickname Hoppin John already, and the dish was simply named after him?

I can't make heads or tails of which story is true.

But what's definitely fact and not fiction is that Hoppin John is a soul food delicacy that incorporates the darling-daughter dish of the South, collard greens.

So it could indeed send somebody "hoppin" with excitement to add this iconic menu item to their New Year's feast!

Hoppin John is a traditional Southern dish consisting of black-eyed peas and rice. The usual accompaniment is collard greens, but kale or turnip greens are sometimes substituted.

### **And why again do Southerners eat black-eyed peas on New Year's Day?**

One theory suggests that black-eye field peas were eaten to ensure good luck because they resembled coins.

Another theory claims that the peas were eaten to bring wealth and good fortune in the New Year. Because as a bean, they are high in protein and nutrients.

A third theory suggests that the peas were eaten to protect against evil spirits. In case someone "put roots on ya," like my grandma would say!

One thing's for sure tho – No matter where this tradition of Southerners and Black folks eating black-eyed peas on New Year's came from. It's now widely practiced worldwide!

### **What do you serve with a soul food black-eyed peas Hoppin John recipe?**

This dish, a combination of black-eyed peas, rice, and collard greens, is often served with cornbread and pork jowl bacon (similar to ham hock or salt pork) either inside the dish or on the side.

### **And are there any modern appliance adjustments for cooking soul food Hoppin John?**

Yeah, you know me!

I make my pork jowl recipe in the air fryer and my Hoppin John in the Instant Pot!

You can cook your collards and black-eyed peas for hours on the stovetop if that's what you like to do. Or use my Instant Pot soul food recipe to yield a quick and easy flavorful meal!

Making Hoppin John in a Crockpot is also possible. Although you'll want to adjust for it to take hours instead of minutes.

Now Beautiful Souls, before we wrap up this New Year's soul food recipes episode, I must thank each of you for a successful first season of The Soul Food Pod!

Thank you for all the listens, comments, replies, and shares.

YOU are the secret ingredient!

You are the best part of each story and dish I share because YOU are the love infused into every recipe.

The Soul Food Pod is the world's first podcast about Southern soul food (ain't that a hmm)!

We didn't know how well this type of show would be received since there was no blueprint of anybody having ever done something like this in the past.

And what we found out... is that YOU were waiting for us to do the damn thing!

I can't express how much gratitude my team and I have for everyone who has listened to or read any part of what we've created.

And the highest compliment is when you cook any of my recipes, bringing my family to the dinner table with yours!

Several talented women make up my team and work on The Soul Food Pot and The Soul Food Pod to ensure we share the *best* of Southern soul food with you.

See this episode's description to meet the team!

I always say, "I'm so proud to share my family's African-American soul food recipes representing our beautiful people and a legacy of what we eat."

So much so that I can't wait to cook and share more with you in The Soul Food Pod Season 2!

Until then, Beautiful Souls, Happy New Year!

And remember that food for the body is not enough. There must be food for the soul.

**Thank you for joining me for this episode of the Soul Food Pod. Did you enjoy today's conversation and recipe?**

If you want more easy to make soul food recipes and Southern food for the soul, then follow me for ideas that make your life easier plus more soulful.

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[TheSoulFoodPot.com](http://TheSoulFoodPot.com)

On the Instagrams - follow me [@ShandaNecole](https://www.instagram.com/ShandaNecole)

Have you had today's recipe?

Would you make it?

Comment below and let me know.

And make sure you rate this podcast Five Stars and subscribe for all the soul food!