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Owere Soup , Nkwobi and More: *How Igbo food shows their worth*

By Chukwunwike Ossai

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Ofe owere picture from sodiq garden

For Igbo people, food is not just about satisfying hunger. It carries more meaning than that. Food is culture, food is identity. They have special foods, like Ofe Owere, which comes from the Owere side, and Nkwobi, typically prepared with cow leg in pepper soup. All these varieties of food show the knowledge of farming the Igbos have, how they welcome people and the unity of a family.

How the Igbo people display their knowledge in farming through food

Igbo land has plenty varieties of food they grow: Yam, Cassava, Cocoyam, Vegetables like Ugu (Fluted pumpkin) and more. Owerre

soup is a kind of soup prepared with cocoyam, which makes the soup thicker. It uses Uziza leaf for its smell and adds ingredients like snails, dry fish, and meat. To prepare this takes a lot of brainstorming, it just can't be prepared anyhow, cause it has existed for years.

Yam is another famous food respected by the Igbos. In New Yam Festivals (Iri ji), it is celebrated as a big event. Even the palm oil used to prepare different soups is obtained from trees planted and harvested by themselves.

Food is a sign of welcome in Igbo culture.

In Igbo culture, when a stranger visits the house of an Igbo person. Food will be given to you as a sign of welcome. Food literally means you are a friend. Even before eating the food, the Kola Nut must be broken first. Then if Nkwobi, isi Ewu (goat head), or palm wine is shared, this means it is a big gathering. They share it among themselves while laughing, talking, and eating. It's just their way to bond.

An Igbo proverb says, "Whoever brings food, brings life." It totally means that when you give someone food, it shows how deeply you care. Food in Igbo land is one way to settle any problem; it's a way to make friends and show that you are a good person. To serve food to someone is a sign that you value that person.

How food brings together both the old and the young.

At home, mothers teach their children how to cook- and not by book, but by doing it together. From how to peel the back of a yam, how to pound fufu, stir soup, roast fish, and the rest. The learning is always a gradual process. They believe Recipe is not in the perper, but in the brain and heart.

Any time they have big events, such as weddings, burials, or traditional festivals, all the families gather together to cook. At that point, a child begins to learn gradually about the different types of

soup made, which include Oha, bitterleaf (onugbu) soup, and what makes Okazi different. As food passes from hand to hand, it also passes down culture and memories.

Igbo food isn't all about eating and going. It carries a whole lot of meaning. From Ofe Owere to Nkwobi, farming sense, good hospitality, and family connection are displayed. Every spoonful taken to the mouth is like eating history, tradition, and love. These varieties of food remind the Igbos of their culture, their worth and their identity.

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ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Chukwunwike Ossai

An enthusiast in tech with deep passion for studying and showcasing the vibrant cultural heritage of southern Nigeria . Combining my skill with my obsession towards African history and traditions to create contributions that impacts the digital space.



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