

A TASTE OF AFRICAN HERITAGE



A TASTE OF AFRICAN HERITAGE STUDENTS EXPLORE THE HEALTHY TRADITIONAL FOODS AND CUISINES OF AFRICAN HERITAGE, ONE BITE AT A TIME

Welcome to Oldways' A Taste of African Heritage Cooking Program

Oldways' **A Taste of African Heritage (ATAH)** series is a new kind of cooking class program that brings back the healthy "old ways" of eating by stirring up excitement and exposure to the foods and flavors of African heritage, thanks to national support from the Walmart Foundation.

Most people, including African Americans, are unaware that many of today's healthiest and most applauded foods have footings in African American history. These are the positive realities and the foods that ATAH invites people to come cook and enjoy with us.

Oldways has just finished piloting ATAH around the country with an outstanding group of organizations, teaching over 100 class participants from all different backgrounds how to reclaim health in the African American community by reclaiming tradition. Here's a look at what these pilots brought to the table!



FORT LAUDERDALE, FL



MILWAUKEE, WI



AUSTIN, TX

Oldways' A Taste of African Heritage cooking class series is designed to help people create a new relationship to food and to reclaim healthy eating patterns through heritage. These new patterns include (1) increased cooking enjoyment, confidence, and frequency in participants, and (2) increased consumption of healthy traditional foods and cuisines.

Student entrance and exit surveys so far show that on average:

- Upon exiting the ATAH series, **40%** of participants reported an increase in cooking frequency
- **85%** of ATAH participants reported cooking “at least 3 times per week” upon graduating
- Over **40%** of ATAH graduates consume herbs and spices more often
- Over **30%** of ATAH graduates use herbs and spices every day in their cooking
- **50%** of ATAH graduates increased their weekly greens consumption
- **35%** of ATAH graduates increased their weekly whole grain consumption
- **50%** of ATAH graduates increased their weekly bean consumption, eating beans 3 times per week, on average
- **25%** ate a wider variety of tubers per week
- Over **50%** of ATAH graduates increased their vegetable intake
- **40%** of ATAH participants report eating vegetables everyday upon graduation
- Over **30%** of ATAH graduates increased the number of plant-based meals they consume in a week

“THE FACT THAT YOU’VE INCLUDED THINGS LIKE *POTLIKKER* AND THE SANKOFA SYMBOL SHOWS THE CULTURAL DETAIL PUT INTO THIS. IT REALLY SHOWS THAT OLDWAYS HAS DONE ITS HOMEWORK.” -- KALAE WHITMAN, PILOT INSTRUCTOR



HEALTHY COOKING

Over **50%** of ATAH participants report cooking “5 times per week to Everyday” upon graduating



HEALTHY EATING

Over **75%** of ATAH graduates report eating greens “at least 3 times per week”



HEALTHY LIVING

Our pilot leaders at the COA Youth and Family Center in Milwaukee took their intergenerational class of teens and seniors out to a local Ethiopian restaurant for a finale field trip. They enjoyed a special African Heritage dinner together, and discovered how eating traditional cuisine helps us eat healthfully and happily outside the home.

A TASTE OF AFRICAN HERITAGE PILOTS



A FEW OF OUR IN-CLASS RECIPES:

1. TANGY COLLARDS SAUTÉ
2. SPICY CHICKPEAS & TOMATOES
3. CURRIED PEPPER COUSCOUS
4. BRAISED GINGERY CABBAGE
5. KENYAN VEGETABLE MASHED POTATOES
6. CARIBBEAN RED BEANS & RICE
7. SENEGALESE SWEET POTATO PEANUT STEW

Let's Get Cooking !

ATAH graduates reported cooking these African heritage foods at home, thanks to this class:

- Beans, rice, quinoa, couscous, kale, ginger and coconut milk
- I cook more with sweet potatoes since learning about the African Heritage Diet.
- Red lentils, red beans, collards, arugula, curry, spices
- The African peanut stew, the quinoa and carrots dish, and the tomato chickpea recipe
- I've made Oldways' Jollof rice, spicy chickpeas, and my own variations of greens, grains and beans based on the dishes from the class.
- I've cooked only the quinoa so far, but in several dishes. I have big plans to cook more during my holiday vacation.
- I made the cabbage and quinoa recipes for a private reading of my play. Everyone loved the dishes, and I'm going to make three or four more over the holidays.
- I cooked brown rice for the first time at home, and I have started to eat vegetables.

ATAH graduates reported the following as some of the most useful pieces of information they learned in class:

- That African American ancestors enjoyed a healthy, whole food diet
- How to incorporate more nutritious foods into every meal
- How to cook healthy foods that kids and families will love
- How to experiment with foods and flavor using traditions
- How to prepare staple foods, like greens and sweet potatoes, in healthy ways
- How to balance meals enjoyably
- The importance of eating beans, whole grains, fruits, and vegetables
- How to avoid too many sodium-rich foods
- That there is a wider variety of *tubers* than just potatoes
- That eating like the old ways is healthier
- How to use herbs and spices as an easy way to add lots of flavor to our food
- Where traditional African American foods come from, how they were used previously, and how we can cook them today
- The medicinal quality that food has on our bodies
- How to cook healthy meals in under 30 minutes
- That plant-based meals can be delicious and satisfying



HEALTH THROUGH HERITAGE



AFRICAN HERITAGE SPICES



COMMUNITY FITNESS



A TASTE OF THE EXOTIC



FOOD FELLOWSHIP

Here's what ATAH students had to say on graduation day:

- I think that so many people would benefit from this class. I have diabetes and high blood pressure. I know that this class will help me to eat better and get off medication. I look forward to the next class series.
- This class has broadened my thinking about food and changed my palate more towards eating healthier foods.
- I wish you had a cooking show with commentary.
- Excellent class!
- We all hope you will have more classes – we had lots of fun!
- Need more classes!
- I have told so many people about this class. Even my Facebook friends are excited and ask me questions. Each class provided me with GREAT knowledge!
- In just one class, I feel energized! I know I would have gained just as much from previous classes. (From a participant who could only make a single class)
- I think all participants will from now on watch their sodium and sugar intakes.
- A wonderful class, very informative!
- This class may have just changed my life. I have pre-diabetes and I lost my mom to diabetes complications. I don't want that to be my road, and now I know how easy it is to go another way.
- This class has totally transformed the way I eat. It's truly worth \$1,000!
- I think it is imperative that we as African Americans need to be educated about the many foods that are healthy to eat and the importance of incorporating them into our lives. This was a wonderful class that needs to be continued for anyone who wants to learn more about our heritage.

Here's what our pilot teachers had to say about the curriculum:

"I've taught nutrition classes before with other institution's curricula where I had to talk out both sides of my mouth. I can't tell a group of African Americans, susceptible to lactose intolerance, that they should be drinking three glasses of milk per day. They never have. Culture is a major part of sound nutrition." – Pilot Instructor, New London, CT

"I feel that our tenants will really enjoy and identify themselves with your curriculum, since your vision is so culturally sensitive. I look forward to participating in this pilot." – Pilot Instructor Jennifer Guzman, of the Boston Housing Authority

"At the end of each class, people walk away with a renewed sense of their ability to make a healthy African dish ... and also build on this community that they're creating by sharing stories." – Pilot instructor Tambra Raye Stevenson in Washington, D.C.

"We are always trying to connect our seniors with others in the community. Cooking bridges the gap between generations," – Andre Goode, Milwaukee pilot coordinator whose classes paired seniors and teens to cook and learn together.

"This curriculum is like the Holy Bible! Other nutrition sources pale in comparison to what your team has put forth ... the scripts, directives, nutritional information, graphics and historical relevance of the curriculum are second to none. The enthusiasm was high among all who attended our first class, and I feel confident the enthusiasm will spread." -- Pilot instructor Neil Brantley in Philadelphia, PA



Thanks and Recognitions

We would like to recognize and thank the following organizations for their hard work and help in piloting **A Taste of African Heritage**.

Their dedication to improving the health and wellbeing of African Americans is invaluable. We are honored to work with them and to learn from their teaching experiences to make this curriculum the best that it can be. Thank you for all you do:

- The Links, Inc.
- The Martin Luther King Jr. School
- The National Black Child Development Institute
- Delta Fresh Foods
- First Light Christian Fellowship's Body and Soul Program
- SANDE Youth Project
- The George Washington Carver Museum
- COA Youth and Family Services
- River Road African American Museum
- Ascension Parish School Board
- Southern University
- Donaldsonville High School
- St. Catherine of Sienna Catholic Church
- Ascension Department of Recreation
- The African American Health Coalition of Southeastern CT
- Ledge Light Health District
- PMMM Urban Agriculture Initiative
- Harambee Charter School
- Sankofa Natural Hair & Health
- Community Bible Tabernacle Church
- Miriam's House
- Paradise Childcare Center
- The Boston Housing Authority
- NativSol



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Bob's Red Mill
FoodMatch
Riviana Foods
Eden Organics



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A PROGRAM WORTH GROWING



Oldways thanks our African Heritage Advisory Committee Members, pilot instructors, partners, participants, and sponsors for making this hands-on program possible.

We were able to reach over 100 families and individuals in our pilot program; our goal is to reach exponentially more with the official Taste of African Heritage class series and other African Heritage & Health programs to come.

Please join us!