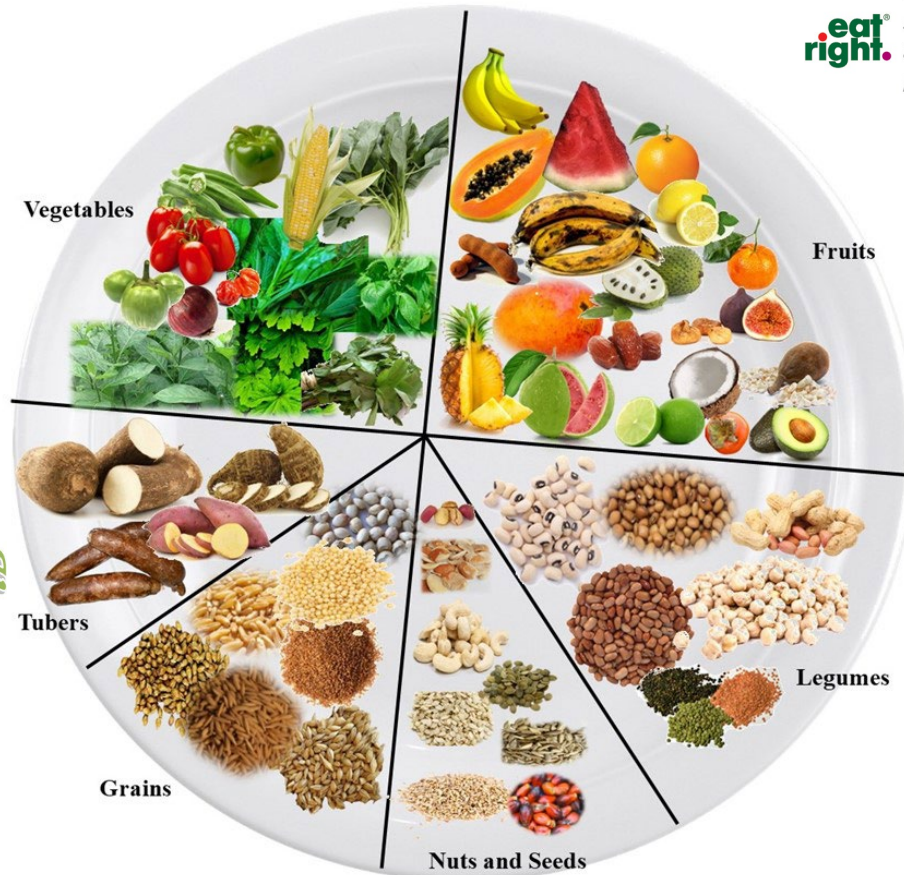


VN DPG Culture Plates: African Cuisine

Vegetarian Nutrition

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Experts in Plant-Based Nutrition

African Plate



Many people today still believe that Africa is a country! As the second largest continent, Africa is comprised of 54 sovereign countries in five regions, representing a diversity of languages, cultures, and foods influenced by trade, religion, war, and migration. What they have in common are similarities in staple foods of plant origin that are rich in protein, fiber, vitamins, minerals, antioxidants, and phytochemicals. In fact, Africa's knowledge of healthy plant-based eating and their medicinal use has largely been unexplored by the West.

In **West and Central Africa**, legumes, vegetables, and green leafy vegetables are cooked together and made into soups and stews. Nuts and seeds are ground and added to soups to thicken and increase protein content. Tubers are pounded into large balls and pinched off into smaller ones to use as utensils for dipping into soups when eating. Stews are eaten over rice. Cowpeas (black-eyed peas) and African brown beans are soaked, ground and either steamed to make *Moi Moi* or fried to make *Akara*, both high in protein. Grains like maize and sorghum are also fermented to create a breakfast meal known as *Akamu*, *Ogi* or *Pap*. Palm fruit is fermented to make wine.

In **East Africa**, communal eating is still practiced. A central plate of food is shared, and hands are used in place of utensils. Traditional Kenyan breakfast includes maize porridge, boiled

cassava or bananas, soup with flatbread, and rice bread with tea or coffee. Ethiopians, a Semitic culture of Orthodox Christian faith, abstain from consuming animal products. Ethiopians are known for their *Injera* Bread made from fermenting *Teff*, a gluten free grain rich in nutrients. *Injera* is adorned with a colorful variety of legumes like chickpeas and vegetables.

North African cuisine consists of a variety of chickpea and lentil stews consumed with grains like wheat, pearl millet and kamut. Sweet pastries made with fruits, nuts and pastes are also common. The main meal dish found in Tunisia and Morocco is *Couscous* made with chickpeas, vegetables, almonds, raisins, herbs and spices. During their holy month of Ramadan, in addition to fasting, North African Muslims consume less meat and a more plant-based diet.

South African indigenous foods consist of breakfast staples like fermented and unfermented maize, sorghum, or millet porridges. *Samp* (dried maize) and Beans, Pumpkin Soup, and Wild Vegetable stews are eaten for lunch and dinner. Sorghum bread, pumpkin seeds, peanuts, and the leaves of pumpkin, watermelon, and sweet potatoes supplement their meals. Native South Africans eat very little meat and have very low rates of colon cancer due to their very high fiber and mostly plant-based diet. South Africans ferment sorghum to make traditional beer.

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Table of Plant Foods, Herbs, Spices, and Beverages Commonly Consumed on the African Continent

	North Africa	West Africa	Central Africa	East Africa	South Africa
Legumes	Lentils Chickpeas Fava Bean Haricot Bean Red Kidney Bean	Cowpea (Black-eyed pea) African Brown Bean African Honey Bean	Cowpea Cannellini Red Bean Haricot Bean	Cowpea Lentils Chickpeas Peas Pigeon Peas Mung Beans Lima Beans	Cowpea Mung Bean Jugo Bean Sugar Beans
Grains and Cereal Grains	Kamut Barley Pearl Millet Wheat Sorghum Oat Maize Rice	Sorghum Finger Millet Pearl Millet Fonio Wheat Maize African Rice Rice	Fonio Millet Maize Sorghum Rice	Teff Maize Millet Sorghum Rice Amaranth	Sorghum Maize Millet Rice
Fruits	Dates Figs Olives Tangerines Clementines Grapes Pomegranate Persimmons	Banana, Plantain Orange Pawpaw Guava Pineapple Mango Lemon, Lime Baobab Breadfruit Watermelon, Avocado Passionfruit, Coconut	Banana Orange Pawpaw Guava Plantain Pineapple Mango Breadfruit Lemon, Lime	Tamarind Pomegranate Tangerine Watermelon Passionfruit Baobab, Mango Breadfruit Soursop Sweetsop Papaya, Dates Coconut Jackfruit, Banana Guava, Plum	Watermelon Passionfruit Mango Sour Plum Jackfruit Pear Papaya Banana Avocado Monkey Apple Lemon, Lime African Cherry
Vegetables	Eggplant Tomato Cucumber Carrots Potato Onion Spinach Jute mallow Kale Zucchini Okra	African Yam, Coco Yam Cassava, Okra, Onion Bitterleaf African Pumpkin Leaves Water Leaves Utazi Leaves Okazi Leaves Uziza Leaves Ora Leaves Nchanwu (Scent Leaves) Tomato, Sweet Potato	Cassava Yam Coco Yam Tomato Sweet Potato Onion Okra Squash Cassava Leaves	Cassava Sweet Potato Taro Root African cabbage Bean leaves Nightshade Garden Egg Jute mallow Okra, Tomato Onions Sweet Bell Pepper	Okra Wild Leek Amaranth Leaves African Cabbage Umfino Sweet Potatoes Cassava Amadumbe Pumpkin Leaves Morogo
Nuts	Pistachios Almonds Pine Nuts	Groundnut Cashew Kola Nut African Walnut	Peanuts African Walnut Bambara Groundnut	Peanuts Cashew	Peanuts Bambara Groundnut
Seeds	Sunflower Seeds Sesame Seeds	Egusi Seeds Ogbono Seeds Locust Bean Ogiri (Castor Bean)	Sunflower Seeds Sesame Seeds	Sunflower Seeds Sesame Seeds	Sunflower Seeds Pumpkin Seeds
Herbs/Spices	Ras el Hanout Harissa Alnif Cumin Taliouine Saffron Za'atar Mint, Cinnamon Cayenne, Cloves Cardamom Nutmeg, Ginger Turmeric, Parsley Fenugreek Coriander	Iyere (African Pepper) Achili Lemon Grass Ehuru (African Nutmeg) Curry, Ginger Garlic Turmeric Yajit Ata Jos Uziza Seeds Uda Iru	Cameroon Pepper White Pepper Turmeric Green Cardamom Nutmeg Ginger	Turmeric Ginger Cayenne Cardamom Caraway Black Pepper Chili Pepper Pili-Pili Q'imam Berbere Mitmita Nettles	Peri-Peri Durban Curry Cape Malay Curry Bay Leaves Coriander Turmeric Ginger Allspice Fennel Cumin
Beverages	Mint Tea Sobia Boza	Hibiscus Tea Zobo/Bissap/Sobolo Palm Wine	Hibiscus Tea Malamba Juice Osang Tea	Ethiopian Coffee Kenyan Coffee Ginger Tea Banana Beer	Ginger Beer Oshikundu Roobios Tea