Sweet Potato and Black-Eyed Pea Stew

Black-eyed peas and sweet potatoes hold deep cultural roots in soul food, symbolizing luck and prosperity. This stew highlights the comforting, earthy flavors of these ingredients while offering a wholesome, plant-based twist that honors tradition and health. Add ½ cup coconut milk just before serving, if desired.

Ingredients:

3 tablespoons vegetable broth

1 large, sweet potato, cut into ½-¾ inch cubes (peel, if desired)(about 2 cups)

1 medium onion, diced

3 cloves garlic, minced

1 teaspoon ground cumin

1 teaspoon smoked paprika

½ teaspoon cayenne pepper (or to taste)

2 cups cooked black-eyed peas (or one 19-ounce can, rinsed and drained)

2 tomatoes, diced (about 1½ cups)

2 cups vegetable broth

2 cups chopped kale, collards, or spinach

2 teaspoons cornstarch mixed with 2 tablespoons water

Juice of 1 lemon (optional)

Salt and black pepper to taste

Instructions:

1. Heat the 3 tablespoons of vegetable broth in a large pot over medium heat. Add the onion and sauté for 5 minutes until softened. Add more broth if needed to prevent sticking.
2. Add the garlic, cumin, smoked paprika, and cayenne pepper. Stir for 1 minute until fragrant.

3. Add the sweet potato, diced tomatoes, and vegetable broth. Bring to a boil, then reduce the heat and simmer for 15 minutes.
4. Add the black-eyed peas and cook another 10 minutes.
5. Stir in the kale, collards, or spinach and cook for an additional 5 minutes until wilted. Add cornstarch mixture and cook another 2-3 minutes to thicken the gravy. Add salt and pepper to taste.
6. Finish with a squeeze of lemon juice. Serve hot, optionally with cornbread, rice, or quinoa.

