

TASTING NOTES

Ghanaian Tasting Menu



September 5 - December 27, 2025

Friday & Saturday evenings

-and-

December 31, 2025

www.trigo.restaurant
306-472-3663 (FOOD)

Trigo Food + Drink
132 Main Street
Lafleche, Saskatchewan

A Warm Welcome

Akwaba! Welcome to Trigo Food + Drink and our Ghanaian Tasting Menu. Ghanaian cuisine and Ghana has been on our list of countries to feature ever since we started embarking on our International Tasting Menus several years ago. Ghana is now our 12th international menu and our first foray into Africa.

Ghana holds a special place in the heart and mind of our Chef Adam. In his previous career as a lawyer, he spent 6 months doing volunteer legal work in the bustling capital city of Accra and then spent time traveling throughout the entire country. The sights, smells, music, fashion, and the sticky humidity one experiences on their first trip to Africa is something that never leaves you. And, of course, the food was something that was new, exciting, unfamiliar, and even a little scary at times.

As we began to develop our Ghanaian menu several months ago we wanted to ensure that we featured some very traditional dishes, such as Okra Soup with Banku and Waakye Stew, but also dishes with more familiar ingredients, with a West African touch, that would be less intimidating for our guests (for example Chicken Wings with Tamarind and Jollof Rice).



Over the course of the 13 dishes on our Taste of Ghana menu there will be dishes you may be unfamiliar with. Some you may love; some you may love less. We strongly believe in featuring some dishes that, while popular in traditional Ghanaian cuisine, may not be something one may order when dining out as a Canadian in Saskatchewan.

As part of the dining experience at Trigo our hope is to introduce new dishes and flavours that one wouldn't normally be able to experience in rural Saskatchewan. We understand that not all dishes will be your favourite, and some you may not like at all. But, with some luck, maybe you will discover a new favourite. It's all part of the experience.

We are very happy you have joined us this evening to experience our Ghanaian Tasting Menu. Sit back, relax, and let us bring a small slice of the cuisine and culture of Ghana to you in our little pocket of south-central Saskatchewan.

Some facts about Ghana

- *Accra*, the capital city along the Gulf of Guinea, has a population of about 5 million;
- *Kumasi*, in the Ashanti region, is often considered the cultural capital and has a population of about 3 ½ million;
- *Kajetia Market* in Kumasi is the largest outdoor market in West Africa;
- *Kwame Nkruma* was the first president of Ghana following independence from Britain in 1957 (it was previously called the Gold Coast). He was one of the most influential leaders in the pan-africanist movement during the decolonization movement in Africa;
- *Cape Coast*, in Ghana's Central Region, is home to *Cape Coast Castle*, historically significant as being a major centre of the trans-Atlantic slave trade;
- *Highlife music* originated in present-day Ghana in the 19th century. A blend of African style beats with a blend of jazz that remains popular throughout the world. You will hear highlife music while dining;

- *Lake Volta* is the largest man-made water reservoir in the world and supplies the majority of Ghana's hydro electricity, in addition to neighboring countries Benin and Togo;
- *Mole National Park* in the Savannah region is home to a large diversity of wildlife, including elephants;
- The *Larabanga Mosque* is one of the oldest mosques in Africa dating back to 1491 and is considered the "Mecca of West Africa"; and
- While there is no definitive documented evidence, Ghanaians claim they were the creators of the popular Jollof rice.



Cape Coast Castle



Kwame Nkrumah



Larabanga Mosque

Some Notes on Ingredients

While some of the ingredients you will encounter during your dining experience may be unfamiliar to you; others you may associate with dishes from Caribbean countries and particular regions of the southern U.S.A. This can mostly be attributable to the Trans-Atlantic Slave routes which originated in West Africa. Foodstuffs like cassava, black-eyed peas, okra, and plantain can often be linked back to west Africa.

Below are some of the ingredients you will encounter in our Taste of Ghana menu.

Calabash Nutmeg (Ehuru)

Native to Africa, it is similar to the nutmeg you may be familiar with but with an added touch of pepperiness and woodiness. You will find Calabash Nutmeg in the Kelewele, Sweet Potato & Taro Root Curry, Jollof rice, and the Bofrot (Puff Puff) doughnut.



Grains of Selim

The wooden pods contain little black seeds that have a musky, aromatic flavour. The pods can be cracked open or be left whole and ground and used in spice mixes & rubs. We use Grains of Selim in our Suya spice mix, Tilapia, as well as a flavouring spice in our Sobolo drink.



Boabab Powder

Boabab is a natural and organic fruit from the boabab tree - or Monkey Tree - as its known in Africa. It's the only fruit in the world that dries on the branch, producing a natural fruit powder. Monkeys also love the fruit, hence the namesake. It has a bright, tangy, citrusy flavour. We incorporate it into a Boabab butter mix for our shrimp dish as well as use the powder in our Boabab Gin & Tonic.



Cubeb Tailed Pepper (Ashanti Pepper)

This is Africa's version of black pepper. Also referred to as Java pepper due to its Indonesian origin, it has a woody pine tree aroma with a mild, peppery, clove-like flavour and slightly bitter aftertaste. If baked, it loses its bitterness and takes on a more rounded complex flavour with hints of cardamom and nutmeg. We use it in our Suya spice mix.



Grains of Paradise (Mesewa/Alligator Pepper)

Native to West Africa this spice is a member of the ginger family. This tiny grain gets its name as it was claimed by medieval spice traders that these peppery seeds grew only in Eden, and had to be collected as they floated down the river out of Paradise. Once crushed, the seeds release a pungent citrusy aroma with hints of jasmine and cardamom. They are said to have aphrodisiac qualities. Grains of Paradise can be found in our Suya spice blend as well as our baked Tilapia.



Herring & Shrimp Powder

These dried and ground ingredients are key elements to the Shito Hot Pepper sauce and the Waayke Stew. They both add a rich, savoury, and umami flavour. Think of it as West African's version of fish sauce, but in dried form.



Banku

We make homemade Banku with a mixture of fermented corn and cassava dough. Left to ferment for 2+ days gives the Banku its characteristic slightly sour taste. Making Banku requires lots of arm strength and can be quite a work-out. With a wooden flat spatula known as a Banku-Ta there is stirring, folding, pounding, and turning to create a smooth doughy ball. It takes time, practice, and patience. Banku is known as one of the “swallows”, a doughy starch used as a side for all kinds of soups, stews, and fish. It is considered mandatory when eating Ghanaian Okra Soup. You may have heard of Fufu, which is another popular swallow in Ghana, made from pounded cassava and plantain. We will be sure to explain the traditional way Ghanaians eat Banku and hope you will try it. We have finger bowls for this reason; but no shame in using a spoon!



Okra Soup with Banku

Gari

Gari is dried, granulated flour made from cassava. It is shelf stable and is used in baking, cereals, and rehydrated into swallows and stews. Gari is mixed with a small amount of stew to rehydrate and sprinkled on our Waakye Stew.



Waayke Leaves (“Waa-tche”)

Waayke leaves are the sun-dried leaves of the red sorghum plant. They are essential in Ghanaian cuisine for making the rice and bean dish known as Waayke Rice. The leaves are used to flavour the water, which cooks the rice. They impart a deep burgundy colour and distinct smoky and slight citrusy aroma to the rice.



*Waaykye leaves with
Calabash Nutmeg*



We will have samples of some of the ingredients listed above available at our market area or on the bar to view. If you'd like to see them please don't hesitate to take a look or ask one of us.

Art Work & Cultural Items

As we do with all of our International Menus we decorate the restaurant with art work and other items associated with the country we are featuring.

Kente (“Ken-Tay”) cloth is one of prominent symbols of Ghanaian culture. The cloth is hand woven and assembled to make a wide variety of items, but traditionally used in ceremonial practices. The patterns and colours are vibrant and have special meaning. You will notice that the table runners are made with Kente cloth patterns. We do have one long piece of authentic Kente cloth hanging by the front entrance for you to see and touch if you’d like to have a close-up look.



We also have a number of carvings, ranging from masks, fertility dolls, and *Sankofa* symbols. The Sankofa adinkra symbol is representative of the Ga people of Ghana. It's an image of a backward-facing bird moving forward carrying an egg in its mouth. This symbol is omnipresent in Ghana and represents the concept of learning from the past to build a better future. The symbol encourages reflection on history, culture, and personal experiences to inform present-day actions and future goals.



The Ashanti Fertility Doll known as '*Akuaba*' represents fertility and good luck and is even used by young girls as a way to prepare for motherhood. Traditionally a woman would wear the doll on her back hoping to conceive a child or in hopes that her current child would be born healthy. Often, the mother who has used the fertility doll will hand it down to her daughter. In preparation for motherhood they will wash the dolls, carry them on their backs, put them to bed, dress, and even "feed" them.



The round head of the Ashanti doll is symbolic of the feminine womb. A high forehead is a symbol of beauty and the neck ring depicts creases caused by fat, which is an indication of health.

Among the Asante people of Ghana, the *Ashanti Stool* represents national heritage and identity. It symbolizes the owner's status, wealth and social rank. Spiritually it is understood that its the seat to the owner's soul and is often said there are no secrets between a man and his stool.



The motif of two crossed alligators with one stomach in our Ashanti Stool represents unity in diversity. A message that we all share a common destiny in spite of our differences.

Please feel free, at any time, to have a look at some of the art work and cultural items we have on display. We are happy to share them with you.

Now....let's eat!

On the Table

Shito is the hot pepper condiment found on almost every restaurant and kitchen table in Ghana. Shito is the common name for the native Ghanaian pepper called Kpakpo Shito. It's also the catch-all name for any Ghanaian hot pepper sauce, regardless if it includes Shito pepper. Aside from hot pepper (we use the common substitute Habanero), the sauce is fried with a generous amount of oil, along with onions, ginger, garlic, anise seeds, rosemary, chilli powder, tomato paste, a homemade spice blend, and finished with coconut oil. However, what gives Shito its funky fermented flavour is the inclusion of dried herring and shrimp powder. Feel free to add Shito to any of the dishes if you like some added heat and flavour.

Let's Begin

Kelewele is a spiced plantain dish that is a popular street food and side dish throughout West Africa. Pronounced "kaylay-waylay" we mix the fried plantain with our homemade spice blend and top with in-house roasted peanuts. Soft, a little charred, and a sweet start to your Ghanaian food journey.



Can you guess what ripeness stage of the plantain is used for Kelewele?

Bankye Akakro (“Ban-she”) is one of our favourite dishes on the menu. Its quite time consuming and labourious to make, generally over a 2 day period. There are a few Youtube videos of Ghanaian women making Bankye Akakro in a joint enterprise sharing the workload which are infomative and show the community spirit in making this popular snack.

Cassava is peeled and the inner tough core is removed (often while holding it in one hand and using a large cleaver...at least in Ghana!). Once peeled, the cassava is grated very finely and then placed in a cloth bag or cheesecloth and squeezed until all of the juice is removed. If time permits the grated cassava is placed in large cloth bags and then hung from a tree for about 24 hours to drain all of the liquid.

The drained and grated cassava is then mixed with salt, grated and diced onion and formed into small balls. Once fried the Bankye Akakro is traditionally served with large chunks of fresh coconut. Here, we have improvised a bit and have made a coconut dipping sauce that you may want to try with it. Or, for the spice lovers, try a little dollop of *Shito* hot pepper sauce with it.



Chicken Wings with Sticky Tamarind Glaze - Time to get your fingers a little messy! Tamarind is a popular flavouring ingredient throughout the world and is often used in drinks in Ghana. Here we include it as the main component in our glaze for the chicken wings. The tamarind pulp is cooked along with garlic, ginger, onions, palm sugar, and raisins before being blended and strained. Finished with fresh lime juice, honey, and a splash of fish sauce brings everything together.



Ingredients for the Tamarind Glaze

Shrimp w/ Garlic & Boabab Butter - After a few attempts on playing around with different ingredients for this coastal Ghanaian shrimp dish we arrived at a marinade and butter with a West African flair.

Marinade

- *Fresh Lemon Juice;*
- *Garlic;*
- *Ginger;*
- *Coconut Oil;*
- *Pineapple Juice*

Boabab Butter

- *Butter;*
- *Lemon Juice & Zest;*
- *Mirasol Chilli Powder;*
- *Boabab Powder;*
- *Cinnamon;*
- *Pepper*

The shrimp is marinated for several hours before being sauteed and basted in the boabab butter.



Tropical Salad - This dish has gone through a few trial runs and most of our taste-testers seem to agree that it's refreshing with a nice underlying citrusy-heat. We've even converted a few non-salad eaters to this one.

The main components include tomatoes, cucumbers, avocado, mango, and papaya. The dressing includes ginger, lime juice, cane vinegar, sugar, extra-virgin olive oil, and a touch of red thai chilli pepper.



Okra Soup with Banku. A famous West African dish, it traditionally calls for one to finely chop the okra and then boil it separately, the purpose and result of which is to create a very slimy okra. The smaller you slice okra the more it will release the mucilage inside the pods, a process only further developed by boiling. We are in the camp of having less slimy okra, so therefore we use sliced okra about 1-2 cm. thick, thereby reducing the sliminess you would typically experience if you were to have this dish in Ghana.

The soup is made with red palm oil along with a blend of onions, garlic, ginger, habanero peppers, fresh tomatoes, and our homemade vegetable stock.

Banku is a Ghanaian swallow (a starchy doughy ball) made of fermented cassava and corn flour. We ferment the dough for 2-3 days. Banku is characterized by having a slight sour smell and taste. Once the dough has fermented it is cooked in a pot with lots of stirring, pounding, and turning. It's quite a workout! Traditionally Banku is eaten with your hands inside the soup. One tears a piece of the banku and uses it to scoop up the soup to your mouth. We encourage you to give it a go Ghanaian style! It may take some practice and best to let the soup cool a bit too. If you prefer to use a spoon that's okay too.



Waakye Stew (Goat Stew) (“Wah-Tchee”) is actually one of Ghana’s favourite breakfast items. This iconic stew is the most popular in Ghana and like many popular stews there are many variations. The most traditional version includes cow feet or skin and various pieces of offal and may also include fried fish. For our version, we have left out these items, but our preparation method is fairly traditional.

A word of caution, Waakye is made with bone-in goat, so please be careful as you will encounter bones in the stew.

Waakye could be described as a very busy dish as there is lots going on with many steps.

The goat is initially simmered in a blended mixture of onions, garlic, and ginger, cumin, rosemary, anise seeds, and a black pepper-clove mixture. Once simmered for about an hour the goat is removed and the cooking mixture is strained, creating a goat broth.

The goat pieces are browned and then removed to drain once again.

For the stew a new blended mixture of onions, garlic, ginger is made and then cooked down until thick and almost caramelized. To this a homemade tomato sauce is added, along with tomato paste, our homemade curry powder, anise seeds, cloves, bay and Maggi seasoning cubes. After a further reduction, the reserved goat broth is added along with the goat meat, shrimp powder, fish powder, and more of the pepper-clove blend. The stew is then simmered for several hours to meld all of the flavours. Waakye is finally garnished with Gari just before serving.



Sweet Potato & Taro Curry. Taro, also known as Cocoyam, is part of the yam family and has a slightly hairy skin (which is peeled). It looks a little like a misshapen coconut, which is probably where it got its name from. It has a slightly sweet flavour and pairs well with yam or sweet potato. For this curry dish we oven roast the sweet potato with a little Suya Peanut Spice (see Chichinga for description). The curry is developed by simmering red onions, garlic, and ginger until paste-like consistency. A little sprinkle of cornstarch along with our homemade curry spice and a little bit of cayenne pepper, coriander, turmeric, cinnamon, and calabash nutmeg rounds out the flavour. We then add coconut milk, the taro root, and homemade vegetable stock before adding the roasted sweet potato. The overall flavour is slightly sweet and creamy with a little heat from the spices.



Chichinga is the quintessential Ghanaian Beef Kebab. The main difference with Chichinga versus other kebabs is the use of Suya peanut spice (Soo-Ya!). Suya spice is very popular throughout Ghana and West Africa, where you can purchase pre-made Suya spice mixes at the grocery store. We make a homemade version consisting of peanuts, tapioca starch, grains of selim, cubeb tailed pepper, grains of paradise, anise seed, Maggi seasoning cubes, garlic powder, onion powder, ginger powder, paprika, and salt. The beef is marinated overnight with the Suya spice and then basted with the marinade while on the grill.



[illegible]

Waakye Rice - Incredibly popular at breakfast and lunch you can see people all over the bustling cities of Accra and Kumasi eating Waakye rice from plastic bags. Although fairly easy to prepare Waakye is given its characteristic burgundy colour and smoky, citrusy flavour from Waakye leaves. The leaves are simmered in water, then removed, leaving behind this colorful and flavourful liquid to cook the rice and black-eyed beans. The rice is finished with a little bit of coconut oil to enhance the flavour. Its the pefect accompaniment to the Waakye goat stew.



Jollof Rice If there was ever a culinary fight between Ghana and Nigeria it would no doubt center on who created Jollof Rice. This dish is an essential component to many meals all over West Africa. Bold and spicy it uses the all too familiar ingredients of blended garlic, ginger, red onions, bell peppers, Habanero peppers and anise seeds. It also includes spanish onions, tomatoes, coconut oil, and a variety of spices. Some say that Jollof rice is as essential to Ghanaian cuisine as a Ragu sauce is to Italy or one of the French Mother Sauces to France, but better!



Dessert

Our Avocado & Chocolate Mousse is light, airy, and with just enough high percentage dark cocoa chocolate to make you swear off those Jello-O packets you've got tucked away in your pantry.

We source our 85% dark chocolate couverture from Choco Estates, a local business from Assiniboia who operates a cocoa farm in Ecuador. It marries beautifully with fresh avocado, agave syrup, almond milk, and sea salt. Topped with a little crumbled pistachios for a little crunch.



Bofrot (Puff-Puff) Step aside Timbits. And dare we say Bofrot can go head-to-head with Beignets? Maybe! This yeated dough is made from flour, sugar, milk, calabash nutmeg, an salt. Once fried and still hot they are tossed in a cinnamon-calabash nutmeg-sugar mix. We've heard that a spoonful of mousse with a piece of Bofrot is the perfect dessert pairing.



Trigo Market & Take-Away Items

Be sure to check out our market area for unique homemade items. We always try to offer homemade treats dedicated to our current and past menus.

We also have a small, but growing, menu of homemade take-away/prepared foods that we recently started offering which may be of interest. These include Chicken Pot Pie, two different kinds of Mac & Cheeses, homemade Spanish Chorizo Sausage, Shepherd & Cottage Pie, in-house roasted coffee, and Salted Dulce de Leche Brownies. All come with ingredient lists and preparation instructions.

Many Thanks

All of us at Trigo want to thank-you for spending your evening with us to experience our Ghanaian Tasting Menu.

We are dedicated to showcasing the culinary delights from all corners of the world. We offer two international menus per year (March - July & August - December). It generally takes between 4-8 months of planning for each of our menus, so we are always thinking ahead to what's next. Our small dedicated team is passionate about providing you with a unique culinary journey and we hope we have enjoyed yourself tonight.

We know many of you come from quite a distance and make a special effort to dine here. We are very grateful and hope to see you again at one of our other upcoming international tasting menus.

Adam, Tina, Keana, Jacey, and Wadena