

# Plantain Pancakes

## Tatale

Eaten hot or cold, these savoury plantain pancakes make a delicious starter or snack and with a generous serving of bean stew can be a very filling lunch.

When plantain skins turn black, they are over-ripe and that's when, I think, they reach plantain perfection and are an ideal base for pancakes and puddings. They are usually fried in palm fruit oil, but I prefer to use rapeseed oil.

1. Place the ingredients in a blender and whizz to form a batter (drop-scone consistency). Set aside in a fridge until you are ready to fry.
2. Heat a large frying pan and add a little oil. Pour half-cups of batter into the pan to form individual pancakes and cook over a moderate heat until bubbles appear.
3. Carefully turn the pancakes over with a palette knife and fry for a further couple of minutes until cooked through, pressing and flattening the pancake with the back of a spatula. Transfer to absorbent kitchen paper and keep warm while you cook the rest.

### Serves 4

4 over-ripe plantains, peeled  
½ scotch bonnet chilli,  
deseed if you wish  
2 onions, roughly chopped  
2cm/1 inch fresh root ginger,  
peeled and grated  
280g/10oz plain flour or  
ground rice  
salt to season  
oil to shallow fry

Serve with stewed bambara beans (page 116) or black-eye beans (page 98) and they are just as tasty with tinned baked beans.

Try frying a spoonful first, adjusting seasoning and consistency as necessary, then continue with the batch.

Alternatively tip the mix from step 1 into a greased loaf tin and bake in a pre-heated oven at 200°C/fan 180°C/375°F/gas 6 for about 40 minutes to make a simple savoury cake. Serve with peanuts.

To make kakro (plantain balls) add a little more ground rice to the mix to thicken and then form egg-size balls and deep fry.

