

## **SHITO (pronounced Shi-to)**

### **Kunle Adesua**

Smoked fish is an aged old tradition across many cultures around the old world. In West Africa fish smoking is deep rooted in tradition; it is an art that transcends slow food preparation. It is an enduring culinary culture and essential ingredient for making 'Shito'.

Smoked fish is 'food for the Gods'. In the worship of ancestral deities and divinities, smoked fish must be present at the alter. In the early days smoked fish were so valuable that, they were means of exchange. Smoked fish is a cultural icon and are still part of the bridal dowry settlement in many cultures across West Africa.

Kunle Adesua is the founder and director of Tribal Tastes Foods. He is a pioneer of physical food processing techniques. Kunle manufactures an array of foods that can last up to 12 months without use of preservatives or excessive salts. Kunle's foods are naturally sugar, dairy, gluten free. These are not trends they are tradition.

Kunle mastered smoking techniques at a very young age and has been smoking food for Australians for the last 20 years and retails from his shop at Melbourne's iconic Queen Victoria Market. At Kunle's smoke house red gum logs are the preferred smoking wood. Why red gum? Red gum is a wood that can burn for a very long time in the smokehouse. The smoking lasts up to 24 hours and red gum completes the cooking process encompassing smoking, cooking, roasting and drying.

The word Shito, pronounced Shi-to is Ga word, which means chilli. The Ga people were Yoruba people who migrated to present day Ghana thousands of years ago. Shito is now universally interpreted to mean hot chilli condiment.

Shito is an aromatic pleasantly hot chilli-condtiment made from smoked fish. It is very tasty and versatile. Shito is traditionally served with fried plantains, blanched green leafy vegetables such as spinach or kale and steamed rice. It can also be used as a natural seafood flavor enhancer by adding to seafood soups or pasta.

## INGREDIENTS

150 ml Palm Fruit Oil\*  
100 ml sunflower oil  
3 large red capsicum, chopped  
2 chopped white onions  
tomato puree  
2 cups smoked dried fish, flaked or granulated (this can be obtained on-line from Tribal Tastes)  
½ cup air-dried Australian school prawns  
2 tbs dried red chilli  
1 tbs dried green chilli  
1 tbs hot chilli powder  
1 tbs himalyan pink salt  
1/3 cup chopped celery  
1/3 chopped parsley  
3 chopped spring onions

## METHOD

Using a high speed blender, granulate smoked fish if required and prawns. Alternatively use a mortar & pestle. Add chillies, chilli powder & salt. Mix through.

Then blend capsicum & tomato to make a puree.

In a large pot on the stove on a medium heat add the palm fruit oil and sunflower oil. Add chopped onion, celery, parsley, spring onions. Sautee for a few minutes. Add the red capsicum, tomato puree. Sautee for a few minutes, then add dry fish and chilli powder mix.

Stir through and bring to the boil. Cover and let simmer on a low heat and cook for an hour. Mixture will become quite thick and dark. Let Shito cool on stove-top. Store in a container such as a bottle, in fridge. Keep shito topped up with oil.

\* Pure palm fruit oil is produced using the flesh of the palm fruit. It is a traditional West African oil which has many health benefits including being rich in natural carotenes. Pure Palm Fruit Oil can be purchased from Tribal Tastes on-line or at the Queen Victoria Market. Avoid buying adulterated Palm Oil from African hair supply shops.