

A Southern, Jewish Tradition

by Rev. Joe Dirt - Wednesday, January 01, 2014

<http://www.curmudgeon-alley.com/a-southern-jewish-tradition/>

My Yankee wife has cooked me another traditional Southern meal to bring in the New Year. We had black-eye peas, turnip greens, rice and corn bread. It took a while to get her to cook cornbread the “right” way. First time she served me cornbread I thought it was cake. Now she makes it in a cast iron skillet



with yellow cornmeal, and it is not sugary sweet.

Traditionally, black-eye peas are for good luck and greens are to bring wealth. There are more than a few theories about why this combination. The one I like best is “Eat poor on New Year’s, and eat fat the rest of the year.”

One I did not know about is the tradition of black-eye peas dates back 500 years to the Talmud:

“According to a portion of the Talmud written around 500 A.D., it was Jewish custom at the time to eat black-eyed peas in celebration of Rosh Hashanah, the Jewish New Year. It’s possible that the tradition arrived in America with Sephardic Jews, who first arrived in Georgia in the 1730s.”

And as Tevye would say, “Tradition.” Southern, Jewish or otherwise, tradition makes the world go round and helps to keep us grounded.

[New Year’s Day Tradition – Black-Eyed Peas and Greens](#)