

## RECOMMENDED RESOURCES

### *Black Food: Stories, Art, and Recipes from Across the African Diaspora*

Edited and Curated by Bryant Terry

#### Community Read, March–May 2023

The Longwood Gardens Community Read is a program designed to encourage reading for pleasure, and to start a conversation. Focusing on literature about gardens, plants, and the natural world, we feature an exceptional book annually (paired with a similarly themed younger readers' book) through a variety of programs, discussions, and lectures across all community partner organizations. For more information about the Community Read, go to [longwoodgardens.org/community-read](http://longwoodgardens.org/community-read).

This guide was prepared by Longwood Gardens Library and Information Services staff for anyone interested in hosting a book discussion (or another program) for the Community Read book.

**If you want to continue to explore the ideas of *Black Food*, here is a list of resources to fuel your thinking. You can find the books at public libraries and local bookstores.**

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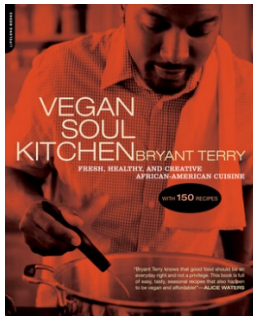
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## COOKBOOKS

Editor Bryant Terry’s website ([bryant-terry.com](http://bryant-terry.com)) has information about his work as a James Beard and NAACP Image Award-winning chef, educator, and author renowned for his activism to create a healthy, just, and sustainable food system. He has written several vegan cookbooks.



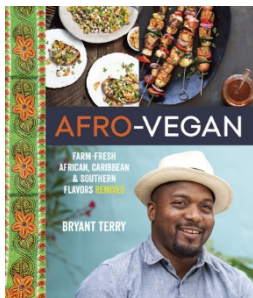
### ***Vegan Soul Kitchen: Fresh, Healthy, and Creative African-American Cuisine***

From the publisher: “...Terry brings soul food back to its roots with plant-based, farm-to-table, real food recipes that leave out heavy salt and refined sugar, “bad” fats, and unhealthy cooking techniques, and leave in the down-home flavor...[he] developed these vegan recipes through the prism of the African Diaspora—cutting, pasting, reworking, and remixing African, Caribbean, African-American, Native American, and European staples, cooking techniques, and distinctive dishes to create something familiar, comforting, and deliciously unique.”



### ***The Inspired Vegan: Seasonal Ingredients, Creative Recipes, Mouthwatering Menus***

From the publisher: “Bryant shares his favorite preparation / cooking techniques and simple recipes — basics to help strengthen your foundation for home cooking and equip you with tools for culinary improvisation and kitchen creativity. He also invites you to his table to enjoy seasonal menus inspired by family memories, social movements, unsung radical heroes, and visions for the future.”

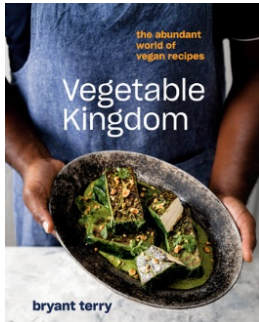


### ***Afro-Vegan: Farm-Fresh African, Caribbean and Southern Flavors Remixes***

From the publisher: “With more than 100 modern and delicious dishes that draw on Terry’s personal memories as well as the history of food that has traveled from the African continent, *Afro-Vegan* takes you on an international food journey. Accompanying the recipes are Terry’s insights about building community around food, along with suggested music tracks from around the world and book recommendations”

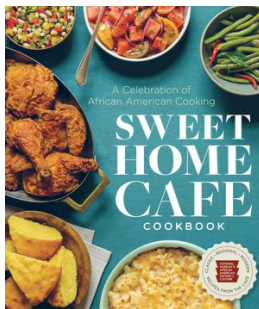


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### ***Vegetable Kingdom: The Abundant World of Vegan Recipes***

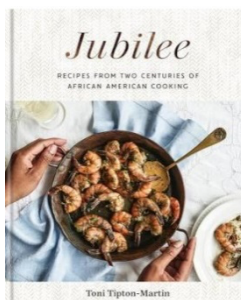
From the publisher: “Food justice activist and author Bryant Terry breaks down the fundamentals of plant-based cooking in *Vegetable Kingdom*, showing you how to make delicious meals from popular vegetables, grains, and legumes.”



### ***Sweet Home Café Cookbook: A Celebration of African American Cooking*** by Albert J. Lukas and Jessica B. Harris\* with contributions by Jerome Grant\*

From the publisher: “Since the 2016 opening of the National Museum of African American History and Culture, its Sweet Home Café has become a destination in its own right. Showcasing African American contributions to American cuisine, the café offers favorite dishes made with locally sourced ingredients, adding modern flavors and contemporary twists on classics. Now both readers and home cooks can partake of the café’s bounty: drawing upon traditions of family and fellowship strengthened by shared meals, *Sweet Home Café Cookbook* celebrates African American cooking through recipes served by the café itself and dishes inspired by foods from African American culture.”

## HISTORY OF BLACK FOODS



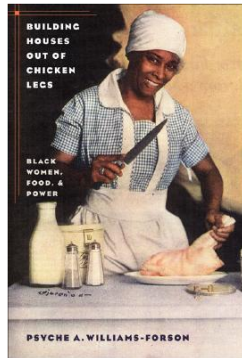
### ***Jubilee: Recipes from Two Centuries of African American Cooking*** by Toni Tipton-Martin\* (Clarkson Potter, 2019)

From the publisher: “Throughout her career, Toni Tipton-Martin has shed new light on the history, breadth, and depth of African American cuisine. She’s introduced us to black cooks, some long forgotten, who established much of what’s considered to be our national cuisine. After all, if Thomas Jefferson introduced French haute cuisine to this country, who do you think actually cooked it? ...Through recipes and stories, we cook along with these



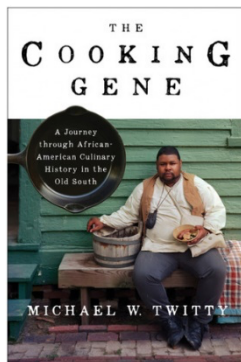
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pioneering figures, from enslaved chefs to middle- and upper-class writers and entrepreneurs... *Jubilee* presents techniques, ingredients, and dishes that show the roots of African American cooking—deeply beautiful, culturally diverse, fit for celebration.”



***Building Houses Out of Chicken Legs: Black Women, Food, and Power***  
by Psyche A. Williams-Forsson\* (University of North Carolina Press, 2006)

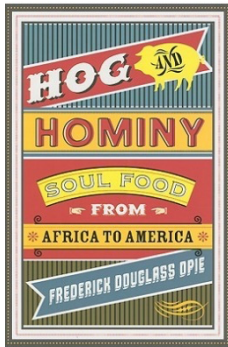
From the publisher: “Chicken—both the bird and the food—has played multiple roles in the lives of African American women from the slavery era to the present. It has provided food and a source of income for their families, shaped a distinctive culture, and helped women define and exert themselves in racist and hostile environments. Psyche A. Williams-Forsson examines the complexity of black women's legacies using food as a form of cultural work. While acknowledging the negative interpretations of black culture associated with chicken imagery, Williams-Forsson focuses her analysis on the ways black women have forged their own self-definitions and relationships to the ‘gospel bird.’”



***The Cooking Gene: A Journey Through African American Culinary History In the Old South***  
by Michael Twitty\* (Amistad, 2017)

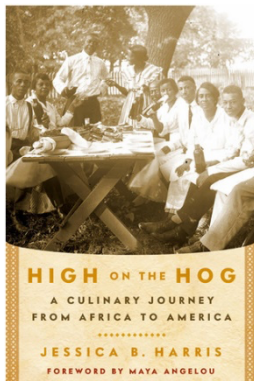
From the publisher: “Southern food is integral to the American culinary tradition, yet the question of who “owns” it is one of the most provocative touch points in our ongoing struggles over race. In this unique memoir, culinary historian Michael W. Twitty takes readers to the white-hot center of this fight, tracing the roots of his own family and the charged politics surrounding the origins of soul food, barbecue, and all Southern cuisine... As he takes us through his ancestral culinary history, Twitty suggests that healing may come from embracing the discomfort of the Southern past. Along the way, he reveals a truth that is more than skin deep—the power that food has to bring the kin of the enslaved and their former slaveholders to the table, where they can discover the real America together.”





***Hog and Hominy: Soul Food from Africa to America*** by Frederick Douglass Opie\* (Columbia University Press, 2008)

From the publisher: “Frederick Douglass Opie deconstructs and compares the foodways of people of African descent throughout the Americas, interprets the health legacies of black culinary traditions, and explains the concept of soul itself, revealing soul food to be an amalgamation of West and Central African social and cultural influences as well as the adaptations blacks made to the conditions of slavery and freedom in the Americas. Sampling from travel accounts, periodicals, government reports on food and diet, and interviews with more than thirty people born before 1945, Opie reconstructs an interrelated history of Moorish influence on the Iberian Peninsula, the African slave trade, slavery in the Americas, the emergence of Jim Crow, the Great Migration, the Great Depression, and the Civil Rights and Black Power movements. His grassroots approach reveals the global origins of soul food, the forces that shaped its development, and the distinctive cultural collaborations that occurred among Africans, Asians, Europeans, and Americans throughout history. Opie shows how food can be an indicator of social position, a site of community building and cultural identity, and a juncture at which different cultural traditions can develop and impact the collective health of a community.”



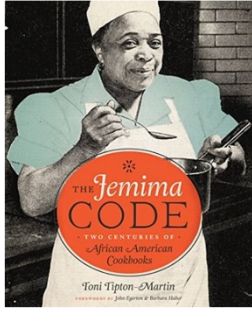
***High on the Hog: A Culinary Journey from Africa to America*** by Jessica B. Harris\* (Bloomsbury USA 2011)

From the publisher: “Acclaimed cookbook author Jessica B. Harris has spent much of her life researching the food and foodways of the African Diaspora... Harris takes the reader on a harrowing journey from Africa across the Atlantic to America, tracking the trials that the people and the food have undergone along the way. From chitlins and ham hocks to fried chicken and vegan soul, Harris celebrates the delicious and restorative foods of the African American experience and details how each came to form such an important part of African American culture, history, and identity. Although the story of African cuisine in America begins with slavery, *High on the Hog* ultimately chronicles a thrilling history of triumph and survival.”



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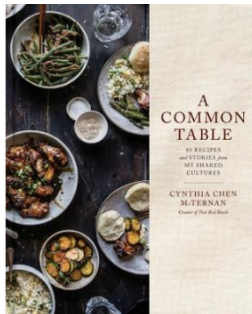




***The Jemima Code: Two Centuries of African American Cookbooks*** by Toni Tipton-Martin\* (University of Texas Press, 2015)

From the publisher: “To discover the true role of black women in the creation of American, and especially southern, cuisine, Toni Tipton-Martin has spent years amassing one of the world’s largest private collections of cookbooks published by African American authors, looking for evidence of their impact on American food, families, and communities and for ways we might use that knowledge to inspire community wellness of every kind. *The Jemima Code* presents more than 150 black cookbooks that range from a rare 1827 house servant’s manual, the first book published by an African American in the trade, to modern classics by authors such as Edna Lewis and Vertamae Grosvenor... These cookbooks offer firsthand evidence that African Americans cooked creative masterpieces from meager provisions, educated young chefs, operated food businesses, and nourished the African American community through the long struggle for human rights.”

## MULTICULTURAL FOODS

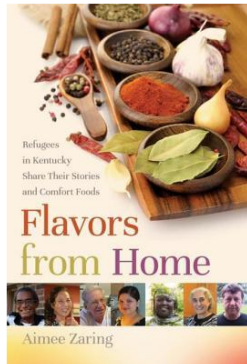


***A Common Table: 80 Recipes and Stories from My Shared Cultures*** by Cynthia Chen McTernan (Rodale Books, 2018)

From the publisher: “In *A Common Table*, Two Red Bowls blogger Cynthia Chen McTernan shares more than 80 Asian-inspired, modern recipes that marry food from her Chinese roots, Southern upbringing, and Korean mother-in-law’s table. The book chronicles Cynthia’s story alongside the recipes she and her family eat every day—beginning when she met her husband at law school and ate out of two battered red bowls, through the first years of her legal career in New York, to when she moved to Los Angeles to start a family. As Cynthia’s life has changed, her cooking has become more diverse...Above all, Cynthia believes that food can bring us together around the same table, no matter where we are from.”



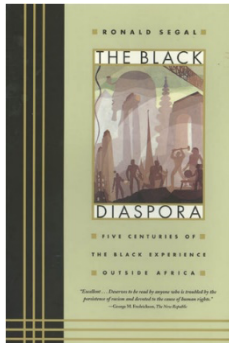
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***Flavors from Home: Refugees in Kentucky Share Their Stories and Comfort Foods* by Aimee Zaring (University Press of Kentucky, 2015)**

From the publisher: “Each year, the United States legally resettles tens of thousands of refugees who have fled their homelands. Refugees, unlike economic migrants, are forced to leave their countries of origin or are driven out by violence or persecution. As these individuals and their families struggle to adapt to a new culture, the kitchen often becomes one of the few places where they are able to return “home.” Preparing native cuisine is one way they can find comfort in an unfamiliar land, retain their customs, reconnect with their past, and preserve a sense of identity... In *Flavors from Home*, Aimee Zaring shares fascinating and moving stories of courage, perseverance, and self-reinvention from Kentucky's resettled refugees. Whether shared at farmers' markets, restaurants, community festivals, or simply among friends and neighbors, these native dishes contribute to the ongoing evolution of American comfort food just as the refugees themselves are redefining what it means to be American.”

## BLACK DIASPORA



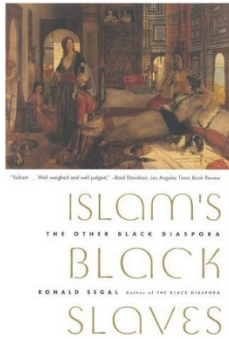
***The Black Diaspora: Five Centuries of the Black Experience Outside Africa* by Ronald Segal (Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 1996)**

From the publisher: “*The Black Diaspora* tells the enthralling story of African-descended people outside Africa, spanning more than five centuries and a dozen countries of settlement, from Britain, Canada, and the United States to Haiti, Guyana, and Brazil. Ronald Segal's account begins in Africa itself, with the cultures and societies flourishing there before the arrival of the Atlantic slave trade, which transported over ten million people to the Americas, after killing at least as many in their procurement and passage... In recounting his own travels through the Diaspora, he shows the continuing plight of peoples confined by the consequences of the past and the prejudices of the present: racked by violence, as in Jamaica and the ghettos of America; denied the right to assert their sense of identity, as in Cuba; acknowledged only to be repudiated, as in Brazil. Yet this is also, Segal reveals, a Diaspora of wondrous achievement. It has immeasurably enriched world culture in music,



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language and literature, painting, sculpture and architecture; has done much to make sports a form of art; and has invested Western culture with the ecological reverence derived from its African source. Segal argues that the black Diaspora has a unique destiny, infused by the love of freedom that is its creative impulse.”



***Islam's Black Slaves: The Other Black Diaspora*** by Ronald Segal (Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2002)

From the publisher: “A companion volume to *The Black Diaspora*, this groundbreaking work tells the fascinating and horrifying story of the Islamic slave trade. *Islam's Black Slaves* documents a centuries-old institution that still survives, and traces the business of slavery and its repercussions from Islam's inception in the seventh century, through its history in China, India, Iran, Turkey, Egypt, Libya, and Spain, and on to Sudan and Mauritania, where, even today, slaves continue to be sold.”





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**Longwood Gardens Blog:**

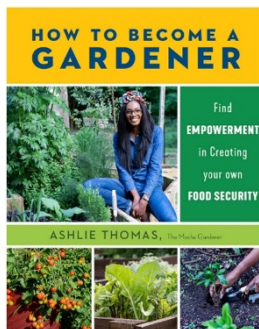
[longwoodgardens.org/blog/2021-02-10/poignant-reading-journey](https://longwoodgardens.org/blog/2021-02-10/poignant-reading-journey)

Longwood Gardens' Director of Library and Information Services offers a few suggestions of excellent nature writing, each offering its own perspective of the African American experience, and each a source of inspiration in itself.

[longwoodgardens.org/blog/2021-01-19/telling-inside-story](https://longwoodgardens.org/blog/2021-01-19/telling-inside-story)

In *Voices in the Landscape*, nationally acclaimed narrator, singer, and librettist Charlotte Blake Alston brings our connection to storytelling and nature to light as she honors the strength, resilience, and contributions of the African American community through the lens of horticulture and the power of story.

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**GARDENING*****How to Become a Gardener: Find Empowerment in Creating Your Own Food Security* by Ashlie Thomas (Cool Springs Press, 2022)**

From the publisher: “Take charge of your family’s food security by learning how to grow your own fruits, vegetables, and herbs—and right along with them, you’ll nurture your own inner strength, too. Food insecurity affects millions of people worldwide. Without access to well-stocked stores or nutritious, fresh foods, those living in “food deserts” face more hunger and health issues than communities where a diversity of food is plentiful. With the inspiration and knowledge found in *How to Become a Gardener*, self-reliance and food autonomy are within reach for anyone willing to get a little dirt under their nails and dig in.”

**Truelove Seeds: [trueloveseeds.com](https://trueloveseeds.com)**

Longwood Gardens is thrilled to be donating packs of the African Diaspora seed collection from Truelove Seeds to our Community Read partners to share with their program attendees. “Truelove Seeds is a farm-based seed company offering culturally important and open pollinated vegetable, herb, and flower seeds. These seeds are grown by more than 50 small-scale urban and rural



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farmers committed to community food sovereignty, cultural preservation, and sustainable agriculture. Truelove Seeds shares profits directly with its growers: 50 percent of each packet sale goes back to the farmer who grew it.”

**Longwood Gardens Blog:**

<https://longwoodgardens.org/blog/2022-09-14/telling-stories-our-idea-garden>

In summer, 2022, we planted crops in Longwood’s Idea Gardens connected to the experience of Africans in America, using seeds from Southern Exposure Seed Exchange and the African Diaspora Collection by Truelove Seeds, which includes many crops that either originated in African or became staples in the new world.

**African Vegetable Gardens:**

*If You Want to Grow a Healthy African American Kitchen Garden – Here are Your Marching Orders* by Michael W. Twitty\*, 2012 [tinyurl.com/mvn8e4cw](https://tinyurl.com/mvn8e4cw)

Michael Twitty, food historian and contributor to *Black Food*, explains why it is important for African Americans to embrace their kitchen gardening and farming history by growing their own healthy food.

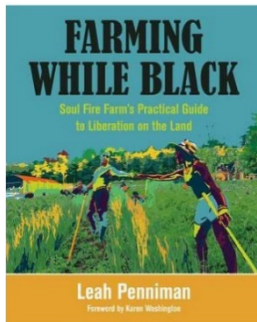
**Sankofa Farm:** [bartramsgarden.org/farm](https://bartramsgarden.org/farm)

“Sankofa Community Farm is a 3.5-acre community-based crop farm, rooted in the experience of the African Diaspora. As a spiritually centered farm, Sankofa prioritizes reverence for Spirit, human beings, and the relationship to the myriad beings beneath and above the soil. The farm offers more than 60 different crops and wild foods for the community’s healing and produces more than 15,000 pounds of food annually for local farm stands and other markets. Sankofa Community Farm emphasizes intergenerational connections in learning and is powered each year by paid high school interns working alongside community elders, neighbors, and volunteers.”



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## BLACK FARMERS



***Farming While Black: Soul Fire Farm's Practical Guide to Liberation on the Land*** by Leah Penniman\* (Chelsea Green Publishing Company, 2018)

From the publisher: “In 1920, 14 percent of all land-owning US farmers were Black. Today less than 2 percent of farms are controlled by Black people—a loss of over 14 million acres and the result of discrimination and dispossession. While farm management is among the whitest of professions, farm labor is predominantly brown and exploited, and people of color disproportionately live in “food apartheid” neighborhoods and suffer from diet-related illness. The system is built on stolen land and stolen labor and needs a redesign. *Farming While Black* is the first comprehensive “how to” guide for aspiring African-heritage growers to reclaim their dignity as agriculturists and for all farmers to understand the distinct, technical contributions of African-heritage people to sustainable agriculture. At Soul Fire Farm, author Leah Penniman co-created the Black and Latinx Farmers Immersion (BLFI) program as a container for new farmers to share growing skills in a culturally relevant and supportive environment led by people of color. *Farming While Black* organizes and expands upon the curriculum of the BLFI to provide readers with a concise guide to all aspects of small-scale farming, from business planning to preserving the harvest.”



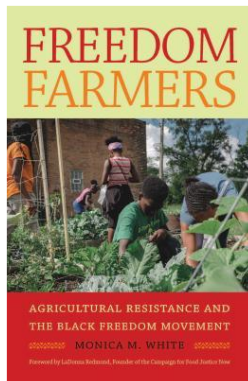
***We Are Each Other's Harvest: Celebrating African American Farmers, Land, and Legacy*** by Natalie Baszile (Amistad, 2021)

From the publisher: “In this impressive anthology, Natalie Baszile brings together essays, poems, photographs, quotes, conversations, and first-person stories to examine black people’s connection to the American land from Emancipation to today. In the 1920s, there were over one million black farmers; today there are just 45,000. Baszile explores this crisis, through the farmers’ personal experiences. In their own words, middle aged and elderly black farmers explain why they continue to farm despite systemic discrimination and land loss. The “Returning Generation”—young farmers, who are building upon the legacy of their ancestors, talk about the challenges they face as they seek to redress issues of food justice, food sovereignty,



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and reparations. As Baszile reveals, black farming informs crucial aspects of American culture—the family, the way our national identity is bound up with the land, the pull of memory, the healing power of food, and race relations. She reminds us that the land, well-earned and fiercely protected, transcends history and signifies a home that can be tended, tilled, and passed to succeeding generations with pride.”



***Freedom Farmers: Agricultural Resistance and the Black Freedom Movement (Justice, Power, and Politics)*** by Monica M. White\* (The University of North Carolina Press, 2018)

From the publisher: “In May 1967, internationally renowned activist Fannie Lou Hamer purchased forty acres of land in the Mississippi Delta, launching the Freedom Farms Cooperative (FFC). A community-based rural and economic development project, FFC would grow to over 600 acres, offering a means for local sharecroppers, tenant farmers, and domestic workers to pursue community wellness, self-reliance, and political resistance. Life on the cooperative farm presented an alternative to the second wave of northern migration by African Americans—an opportunity to stay in the South, live off the land, and create a healthy community based upon building an alternative food system as a cooperative and collective effort. *Freedom Farmers* expands the historical narrative of the black freedom struggle to embrace the work, roles, and contributions of southern Black farmers and the organizations they formed. Whereas existing scholarship generally views agriculture as a site of oppression and exploitation of black people, this book reveals agriculture as a site of resistance and provides a historical foundation that adds meaning and context to current conversations around the resurgence of food justice/sovereignty movements in urban spaces like Detroit, Chicago, Milwaukee, New York City, and New Orleans.”

\*Indicates that the author is a contributor to *Black Food*



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