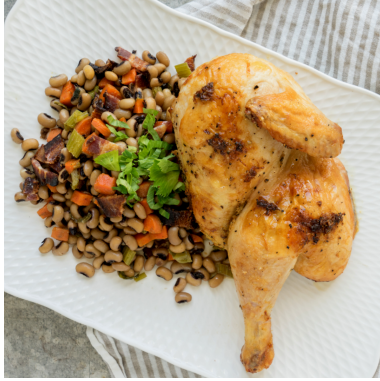


## Hoppin' John + Roast Chicken – Alison Mountford

*By Alison Mountford, contributing chef, for RINewsToday.com*



**QUICK TIPS** - Hoppin' John is a southern dish that symbolizes luck in the New Year. The black-eyed peas are meant to stand for pennies.

### INGREDIENTS

- 3 cup black-eyed peas (dried)
- 6 cup water
- 1 chicken, whole (about 3.5-4.25 pounds)
- .5 teaspoon black pepper
- 1 teaspoon kosher salt
- .5 teaspoon cayenne pepper
- 1 teaspoon dried thyme
- 1 Tablespoon unsalted butter
- .5 pound bacon (thick-cut slices)
- 2 Tablespoon extra-virgin olive oil
- 1 yellow onion
- 1 carrot
- 3 rib celery (save some leaves for garnish!)
- 1 bell pepper (green) (small)
- 3 clove garlic
- 1 lemon

### INSTRUCTIONS

1. PREHEAT THE OVEN TO 425 DEGREES

2. BLACK-EYED PEAS

In a pot, bring black-eyed peas and water to a boil. Stir well and turn to medium-low, partially cover. Simmer peas for 40 minutes. Instructions continue below.

3. CHICKEN

Place the chicken in a large casserole dish. Flip its wing ends behind the neck of the bird. If you have some twine, tie the leg bones together at the bottom. If you don't, you can skip this part, but it won't look as classic.

#### 4. SPICES

Mix together the pepper, salt, cayenne and thyme. Spoon about 2/3 of the spice mix over the chicken evenly. Dot the skin with the butter and place it in the middle of the oven. Roast for about 60 minutes or until done.

\*It will be done when the leg registers 165 degrees on a thermometer. Or, when the leg meat is cooked through, you can test by sliding in a paring knife and taking a look if needed.

#### 5. BACON

Dice the bacon into squares. Heat a large flat bottom pan with at least 2" sides over medium-heat heat. Add olive oil and the bacon. Sauté for about 6 minutes or until the bacon has begun to brown.

#### 6. VEGGIES

Meanwhile, dice the onion, carrot, celery and bell pepper all into a small dice. Mince the garlic cloves. Add this to the bacon and sauté it all for another 6 minutes. Add the remaining spice blend.

#### 7. RETURN TO BLACK-EYED PEAS

Once they're done boiling for 35-40 minutes, they should be tender but not falling apart. Drain them but reserve a ½ cup of the boiling liquid.

Stir into the pan with the veggies and bacon. Pour in the cooking liquid. Zest and juice the lemon into the pot.

Taste the mixture. It may need salt, add ½ teaspoon or a pinch at a time as needed.

#### 8. CHICKEN

When the chicken is done, remove from the oven. When ready, slice the leg and thigh. Remove the breast meat and slice it.

#### 9. SERVING

Serve a big scoop of beans and top with chicken. If you have celery leaves left, garnish the plates with them.