



## **SOBAHEG MADE WITH TURKEY** **~ A WAMPANOAG RECIPE**

*Courtesy of Plimoth Plantation, Plymouth, MA*

Sobaheg is the Wampanoag word for stew. Like most stews, this dish is easily adapted to seasonal ingredients. Variations of this dish are still made in Wampanoag households in New England. Like other cuisines, Wampanoag cookery has continued to evolve, incorporating new ingredients and techniques into the traditional cuisine. Salt is not mentioned in the original recipe, even though it was probably used when the recipe was recorded in 1674. Before trade with Europeans, the Wampanoag got the salt necessary to good health by consuming seafood. After the arrival of the English, salt became a very popular trade commodity with the Wampanoag.

*Their food is generally boiled maize or Indian corn, mixed with kidney-beans, or sometimes without. Also they frequently boil in this pottag fish and flesh of all sorts, either taken fresh or newly dried These they cut in pieces, bones and all, and boil them in the aforesaid pottage. I have wondered many times that they were not in danger of being choked with fish bones; but they are so dexterious to separate the bones from the fish in the eating therof, that they are in no hazard. Also they boil in this furmenty all sorts of flesh, that they take in hunting; as venison, beaver, bear's flesh, moose, otters, rackoons, or any kind that they take in hunting; cutting this flesh in small pieces, and boiling as aforesaid. Also they mix with the said pottage several sorts of roots; as Jerusalem artichokes, and ground nuts, and other roots, and pompions, and squashes, and also severall sorts of nuts or masts, as oak acorns, chestnuts, walnuts; these husked and dried, and powdered, they thicken their pottage therewith. (Gookin 1674:10)*

*French-beans, or rather American-beans, the Herbalists call them kidney beans from their shape and effects, for they strengthen the kidneys; they are variegated much, some being bigger a great deal than others; some white, black, red, yellow, blew, spotted...(Wood 16: 53)*

### **MODERN RECIPE NOTES**

- ½ pound dry beans (white, red, brown, or spotted kidney-shaped beans)
- ½ pound yellow samp or coarse grits
- 1 pound turkey meat (legs or breast, with bone and skin)
- 3 quarts cold water
- ¼ pound green beans, trimmed and cut into 1-inch lengths
- ½ pound winter squash, trimmed and cubed
- ½ cup raw sunflower seed meats, pounded to a coarse flour

Combine dried beans, corn, turkey, and water in a large pot. Bring to a simmer over medium heat, turn down to a very low simmer, and cook for about 2 ½ hours. Stir occasionally to be certain that the bottom is not sticking.

When dried beans are tender, but not mushy, break up turkey meat, removing skin and bones. Add green beans and squash, and simmer very gently until they are tender.

Add sunflower flour, stirring until thoroughly blended.