



# Hoppin' John I

*lightly adapted from Sean Brock*

*serves 6*

- 1 pound smoked ham hock
- 2 ounces bacon (about 3 slices)
- 1 large sweet onion, chopped
- 3 cloves garlic, smashed
- 2 medium carrots, chopped
- 2 celery ribs, chopped
- 2 tomatoes, chopped (canned is fine)
- 1 large sweet apple, chopped
- 1 bay leaf
- 1/2 teaspoon thyme
- 7 black peppercorns
- 1 cup Anson Mills Sea Island red peas, soaked in a pot of water in the refrigerator over night  (or substitute black-eyed peas)
- 1 1/2 cups medium dice onions
- 1 cup medium dice carrots
- 1 1/2 cups medium dice celery
- 2 garlic cloves, thinly sliced
- 1 bay leaf
- 1/2 teaspoon thyme
- 1 jalapeño, sliced
- 1 tablespoon unsalted butter
- 1 tablespoon cider vinegar, or to taste
- 1 teaspoon coarse sea salt
- 1/4 teaspoon ground cayenne

- 1 cup Anson Mills Carolina Gold Rice (or substitute best quality long-grain white rice)
- 4 tablespoons unsalted butter, cubed
- Sliced chives or scallions, for garnish
- Hot sauce (Crystal or Tabasco)

Place first 11 ingredients (through peppercorns) in a stockpot with 10 cups cold water and bring to a simmer. Continue to simmer gently for 4 hours. Cool, then strain out and discard solids.

Drain the peas and add to the stock, along with all of the remaining ingredients through the jalapeño. Cook the peas, partially covered, over low heat until they are soft, about 60-90 minutes. Season to taste with coarse sea salt. (The peas can be cooked ahead and refrigerated in their liquid for up to 3 days. Reheat, covered, over low heat before proceeding.) □ Drain the peas, reserving their cooking liquid. Keep warm, covered, over very low heat, while you make the gravy and rice.

To make the gravy, measure out 1 cup peas and 2 cups cooking liquid and combine in a blender with the butter. Blend on high until smooth, about 3 minutes. Add cider vinegar. Season with salt and freshly ground black pepper to taste. (Gravy can be made up to 3 days ahead and kept in a covered container in the refrigerator. Reheat, covered, over the lowest possible heat, stirring occasionally to prevent scorching.)

Preheat the oven to 300°F. Bring 4 cups water, 1 teaspoon salt and the cayenne pepper to a boil in a large saucepan over medium-high heat. Reduce the heat to medium, add the rice, stir once, and bring to a simmer. Simmer gently, uncovered, stirring occasionally, until the rice is al dente, about 15 minutes. Drain the rice in a sieve and rinse under cold water.

Spread the rice out on a rimmed baking sheet. Dry the rice in the oven, stirring occasionally, for 10 minutes. Scatter the butter evenly over the rice and continue to dry, stirring every few minutes, for about 5 minutes longer. All excess moisture should have evaporated and the grains should be dry and separate.

To complete, use a slotted spoon to transfer the peas to a large serving bowl (should not be soupy). Add the rice and gently toss the rice and peas together. Drizzle gravy over the top, sprinkle with chives or scallions, and serve. Pass additional gravy and hot sauce on the side.