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Sold My Soul to the Devil-ed Eggs

Serves 12

12 large eggs, hard-boiled, peeled, and split lengthwise
1 teaspoon fine sea salt
2 green onions, white and green parts, finely chopped
2 tablespoons unsalted butter softened
1 tablespoon dill pickle relish
1 teaspoon yellow mustard
2 tablespoons mayonnaise
Paprika, for garnish

In a small bowl, mash the egg yolks with a fork until smooth. Stir in the salt, onions, butter, relish, mustard, and mayonnaise. Spoon or pipe the mixture into egg-white halves. Sprinkle with paprika.

Notes:

- I am very ticky about hard-boiled eggs. That unsightly green ring around yolks can be avoided by following these simple steps: Place the eggs (it is best if they are close to the expiration date so they'll peel well later) in a medium saucepan. Cover by 1 to 2 inches with cold water. Add 1 tablespoon salt. Bring to a boil over high heat.

- Cover the pot, reduce the heat, and simmer for 30 seconds. Remove from the heat and let sit undisturbed for 13 minutes. Rinse the eggs under cold water for 5 minutes to cool. Gently crack each egg and place in cold water for 5 more minutes before peeling.

- I always give a deviled egg plate as a wedding gift.

- For a canapé, deviled quail eggs are a unique choice. The eggs need to be at least a week old to peel easily. Simmer in water for 5 minutes only. Cool under running water and crack the shells. Let stand in the cold water for 15 minutes before peeling.

Cooking to the Blues

The tales of Robert Johnson and other mystic blues men meeting Papa Legba, the trickster god, at the crossroads, and trading their eternal soul for fame and fortune, are the mythologies of this land, echoing across the open spaces like the moan of a freight train in winter. Legend and evidence have it that Robert Johnson was buried three times before his bones had a final resting place, just outside of town out on Money Road, at the small white clapboard Little Zion Church.



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Sold My Soul to the Devil-ed Eggs, (continued)

These deviled eggs are featured in a cooking class I teach, accompanied by a blues man by the name of Terry "Harmonica" Bean. It is an amusing tribute to our local flavors and rhythms. Mr. Beans' business card informs the recipient that "his band or himself" is available for gigs. He plays the guitar, drums, and obviously the harmonica all at the same time, a one-man blues band. I think this self-sufficient musical talent may have cut a deal with that old trickster, Papa Legba.

To pay homage at the great blues man Robert Johnson's final graveside, get in touch with Mr. Sylvester Hoover at Hoover's Grocery and the Old Times Museum in Baptist Town, Greenwood, Mississippi.