

BrassWok

THAI COOKING DEMYSTIFIED

Fresh Spring Rolls (Salad Rolls)

INGREDIENTS:

6-8 sheets rice roll wrappers
6-8 prawns or a poached chicken breast, thinly sliced
1 cup shredded carrot (or julienned)
2 cucumbers
4 string beans
1 cup bean sprouts
1 cup fresh rice vermicelli (Khanom Jeen) or shredded jicama (crunchy and juicy root vegetable)
A bunch of green salad lettuce
A handful of Thai sweet basil
A handful mint leaves

Dipping Sauce:

1-3 Bird's eyes chilis (or half a chili for mild spicy)
1-2 cloves garlic
1-2 coriander roots or stalks hopped finely (if not available then use the stems, chopped, about 1 table spoon, or omit if you don't like coriander/cilantro)
1/2 Tbsp palm sugar
1/2 Tbsp white sugar
2 Tbsp lime juice
1 Tbsp fish sauce
1/4 cup chicken or seafood stock, or water
2-3 Tbsp roasted peanuts
2 Tbsp fresh coriander, chopped finely

DIRECTIONS:

- 1) In a stone mortar and pestle (or a blender) pound chilis, garlic, and coriander root until fine. Add sugar and roasted peanuts then muddle until mixed. Add lime juice, fish sauce, and stock or water, mix until combined well. Stir in the chopped fresh coriander. Set aside.
- 2) Devein the prawns through the last section of the shell. Blanch in gentle boiling water for 1 minute or until just cooked. Remove from heat and drop them in cold water for a few minutes. Remove from cold water and peel off the shell, carefully slice half through the back. Set aside.
- 3) If use chicken breast, bring it to a gentle boil in a pot with water just enough to cover the chicken. Leave to cook for about 10 minutes or until cooked through. Remove from stock and thinly slice or fork shred into flossy thin strip. Or leave to cool and hand shred it to thin strips. Reserve the stock.
- 4) Peel and cut lengthwise into thin sticks the cucumber (remove seeds).
- 5) Blanch string beans for a few minutes and bean sprouts for half a minutes. Remove and set aside. Or use fresh.
- 6) Dip (not soak) the rice paper in water for 5 seconds and place it on a clean board. Lay vegetables and meat of choice and preference. Roll up the sheet gently but firmly until the end. Make sure the filling is tightly compact so when you cut into bitesize the filling will not crumble away.
- 7) Cut into bite size and serve with the sauce.

Mango & Sticky Rice Dessert

INGREDIENTS (Makes 4-8 servings):

Sticky Rice with Coconut Syrup

- 1+1/2 cup, about 300 grams, Thai glutinous rice (preferably Khiaw Ngoon breed)
- 2 L water (to soak the rice)
- 1/2 tsp alum powder (optional)
- 1/2 cup coconut milk
- 1/2 cup water
- 1/2 cup sugar
- 1/2 tsp salt
- 2-4 sweet mangos, to serve

Coconut Cream Topping

- 3/4 cup coconut milk
- 1 Tbsp rice flour (dissolved in 1/4 cup water)
- 1 Tbsp sugar
- 1/2 tsp salt
- Fried golden mung bean sprinkles to top (optional)

DIRECTIONS:

Rice preparation and cooking:

- 1) In a large bowl, wash the rice by submerging in water and gently rubbing it between your hands. Then rinse and drain the cloudy water from the bowl. Do this twice.
- 2) Add clean water to the bowl enough just to cover the rice by about 3 cm.
- 3) **OPTIONAL:** Add alum powder. Stir by hand to dissolve it and soak the rice at least 3 hours. The alum will give the rice the nice sheen.
- 4) Fill the bottom pot of your steamer $\frac{3}{4}$ full of water. Bring it to boil on high heat.
- 5) Rinse the rice in water several times until the water is no longer cloudy. Drain the rice and pour into muslin cloth to go into a Thai bamboo steamer. You can also just use a muslin cloth and steam it in your usual steamer.
- 6) Steam for about 15 minutes and flip the muslin bundle over to evenly steam the rice on both sides.
- 7) Steam for a total of 30 minutes or until the rice is cooked and opaque.

Coconut Syrup:

- 8) While the rice is being steamed, prepare your coconut syrup by adding coconut milk, sugar, salt into a brass wok. If you don't have one you can also use another wok or pot. Stir all the ingredients together until sugar is dissolved.
- 9) When the rice is almost cooked, place the wok of coconut syrup onto the medium heat.
- 10) Keep stirring until it comes to a gentle boil. Turn off the heat and put the syrup mixture into a heat proof container with a lid.
- 11) When the rice is cooked, turn off the heat and gently tip the rice into the syrup bowl. Quickly stir the rice into the syrup and make sure they are thoroughly mixed. Close the lid and let sit for 10 minutes.
- 12) Open the lid and stir to fluff the rice with a spatula. Close the lid and let the rice absorb the remaining of the coconut syrup, if any remains. Let cool completely while making the coconut cream topping.

Coconut Cream Topping:

- 13) In a brass wok, or heavy bottom saucepan, combine coconut milk and rice flour together and stir until the flour dissolves.
- 14) Add sugar and salt, stir again until sugar dissolves.
- 15) Place over medium low heat and keep stirring until the sauce is thicker and can coat the back of a wooden spoon (think custard consistency). Turn off the heat.
- 16) Plate your cooled sticky rice and pour the coconut cream topping over or serve in a small side dish to be added to each guest's preference. Add fresh sliced mango to the side.
- 17) For a modern style dish add crunchy, fried golden mung bean sprinkles on top of the coconut sauce (old fashioned fans may find this disrupts the soft and smooth texture of the dessert, and opt out).

Pad Thai Noodles

INGREDIENTS:

Pad Thai Sauce (6-8 portions):

- 3/4 cup (approx 200g) palm sugar
- 1 1/4 cups tamarind juice (made from 50g seedless sour tamarind and 1 cup water)
- 1/2 cup fish sauce (or soy sauce for vegetarian)

Pad Thai Ingredients (2 portions):

- 1+2 Tbsp vegetable oil
- 1 Tbsp finely chopped garlic
- 2 Tbsp thinly sliced shallots
- 120 g fresh Pad Thai rice noodles, or dried one soaked to soften and drained
- 1 cups chicken stock or water
- 1/4 cup Pad Thai sauce
- 100 g medium prawns (optional), peeled and deveined
- 2 eggs
- 1/4 cup firm tofu (bean curd), diced and shallow fried until golden (and crispy if preferred)
- 1 tsp little dried shrimps (optional)
- 1 Tbsp sweet preserved radish, finely chopped
- 1-2 cups bean sprouts
- 2-3 Tbsp roasted peanuts, crushed
- 50 g garlic chives, reserve a few young stalks for serving, cut the rest into 1 inch length
- 1 tsp chili powder, to taste (you know your limit!)
- 1 tsp sugar, to taste

DIRECTIONS:

The Sauce:

- 1) Combine all the sauce ingredients together in a saucepan. Note that if your palm sugar is very firm you should chop it with a knife on a chopping board first, to help it dissolves quickly.
- 2) Place the saucepan on medium heat and keep stirring until sugar is dissolved completely. Simmer and reduce the sauce until it thickens and turns dark like molasses; about 10-15 minutes.
- 3) Turn off the heat. You can use the sauce right away or cool and keep in a jar in the fridge for later use. This recipe makes enough sauce for about 6-8 dishes or so. It should keep for about a couple of months in the fridge.

Pad Thai:

- 1) In a wok, heat 1 Tbsp oil over medium high heat until very hot. Add the prawns and keep an eye on them until they are just about cooked through. Remove prawns from the pan and set aside.
- 2) In the same pan, add another 2 Tbsp of oil. Add the shallots and garlic, stir until just starts to become fragrant. Add preserved radish, little dried shrimps and tofu. Cook until the garlic starts to brown.
- 3) Add the noodles and the sauce, and keep stirring for a few second to "fry up" the sauce, before adding 1/2 cup of water or stock and cook until the noodles absorb all the water.
- 4) Once all liquid has been absorbed check the consistency of the noodles. If they are still too chewy, add another 1/4 cup stock or water (you may not need to use the full 1 cup specified in the ingredient list).
- 5) When all the sauce has been absorbed, push the noodles to one side of the pan and add the eggs. Scramble the eggs a little bit and let the eggs set about half way before adding back the pre-fried prawns and combining everything together in the wok.
- 6) Add the bean sprouts, garlic chives, and half of the peanuts. Turn off the heat and toss just to mix.
- 7) Plate the noodles and sprinkle with the remaining peanuts and chili powder. Serve with a wedge of lime, extra bean sprouts, garlic chives stalks, and extra chili powder or flakes if desired.

Som Tam (Green Papaya Salad)

INGREDIENTS:

1 clove garlic
1-2 Thai Bird's Eye chillies (or half, for mild spiciness)
5 cherry tomatoes, or 1 medium one, sliced
2-3 string beans cut into 2.5 cm pieces
1 Tbsp fish sauce (or soy sauce for vegetarian)
1/2 Tbsp palm sugar
2 Tbsp of lime juice
1/2 Tbsp of little dried shrimps (optional)
2 Tbsp of roasted peanuts
A heaping handful (about 100-150g) of shredded green papaya
Cabbage and a couple of string beans to serve on the side.

DIRECTIONS:

- 1) In a clay mortar (as opposed to a heavy stone mortar, which will easily reduce your salad to a pulp) and wooden pestle, coarsely crush garlic and chillies. NOTE: The more you crush the chilli the spicier your dish will be. If you prefer less spicy, crush the chilli coarsely and then remove from the mortar and set aside. Add again when you have mixed all the other ingredients.
- 2) Add string beans and dried shrimps, pound until the beans are just crushed.
- 3) Add peanuts and lightly crush them.
- 4) Add palm sugar and work to gently incorporate.
- 5) Add tomatoes, fish sauce, and lime juice. Gently bruise the tomatoes and press around the mortar to mix everything together. Make sure the palm sugar is completely dissolved.
- 6) Add papaya. With the pestle in one (left) hand and a big spoon in the other (right hand), gently bruise the salad while alternately using the spoon to flick the ingredients from the bottom of the mortar to mix everything together thoroughly.
- 7) Plate up and serve with cabbage wedges and string beans.

Basil Chicken **(Pad Kaprao Gai)**

INGREDIENTS:

2 Tbsp cooking oil
1 Tbsp garlic, coarsely crushed
1-10 Thai Bird's Eye chillies (you know your limit!)
250g chicken meat, coarsely chopped or minced
1/2 Tbsp fish sauce
1/2 Tbsp light soy sauce
1/2 Tbsp dark soy sauce
1 tsp sugar
1/2 cup Thai holy basil leaves

DIRECTIONS:

1. Heat the oil in a wok or a sauté pan over medium high heat. When the oil is hot add the garlic and chillies. Stir quickly and keep an eye on it.
2. Before the garlic turns golden brown and when you are hit with the aromatic punch of fried chillies, add the chicken and stir firmly to break the meat that will start to clump together in the heat.
3. When the chicken is about 80% cooked, add the fish sauce, and the 2 soy sauces; stir well to combine.
4. Keep stirring and make sure the chicken meat is cooked through. Taste and if you feel like something is missing, add the sugar. It will round out and harmonise the flavour.
5. Lastly, add the basil leaves. Stir a few times just to wilt the herbs then turn off the heat.
6. Serve on top of steamed rice on a plate, or as a main dish to share. My favourite variation is to add leftover steamed rice into the wok before turn off the heat and mix everything together to make Pad Kaprao fried rice.

Green Curry Paste

INGREDIENTS:

1 tsp coriander seeds
1/2 tsp cumin seeds
1/2 tsp white peppercorns
1-2 green Spur chillies, thinly sliced
1-5 (optional) green Bird's Eye chillies, sliced
1 tsp coarse sea salt
1 tsp mature galangal, sliced finely chopped
2 tsp lemongrass, thinly sliced
1 tsp Kaffir lime zest, finely chopped
1 tsp fresh turmeric, thinly sliced
1 Tbsp Thai garlic
2 Tbsp shallots, finely chopped
1 tsp shrimp paste

DIRECTIONS

- 4) Dry roast (toast without oil or water) coriander seeds and cumin seeds in a pan on a medium low heat. Keep stirring and do not leave it as it will burn very quickly. Just when they start to release their aroma, take off the heat.
- 5) Let cool slightly, then grind the seeds and the white peppercorns to a fine powder in a mortar (or a coffee grinder, then put it in a blender if you don't use a mortar.)
- 6) Add all the chillies and salt, pound (or blend) them to a fine paste.
- 7) Add all the other ingredients, preferably in the order they are listed in the ingredients above, i.e. starting with galangal which is the hardest herb, and ending with shallot.
- 8) When the mixture becomes a smooth paste add shrimp paste. Grind to combine well.

Green Curry with Chicken

INGREDIENTS:

1 Tbsp vegetable oil
1 cup coconut milk
2 Tbsp [green curry paste](#)
200g chicken breast (or your favourite cut), sliced into bite size pieces (or chopped, bone in)
1 cup stock or water
4-6 round eggplants quartered and soak in lightly salted water
1/4 cup pea eggplants
1 Tbsp fish sauce
1 tsp palm sugar
A handful Thai sweet basil leaves
1 red chilli pepper, sliced diagonally

DIRECTIONS:

- 9) In a wok, over medium, low heat, add the oil, the curry paste, and about 2 Tbsp of coconut milk to fry the paste. Add another 2 Tbsp of coconut milk when the paste gets dry and the green oil sizzles, keep adding the milk about 2-3 times and fry the paste until it releases the aroma and the green oil visibly separates.
- 10) Add chicken meat and keep stirring until it's half cooked through.
- 11) Increase the heat to medium-high and add the rest of coconut milk. Continue stirring to make sure all the curry paste is off the bottom of the pan. Add the stock or water and bring to a boil.
- 12) Add the round eggplants and pea eggplants.
- 13) Cook for another 3-4 minutes or until the vegetables are just cooked through. If you can pierce a sharp knife through the round eggplant easily, they are cooked.
- 14) Season with fish sauce and palm sugar to taste. If you don't make the green curry paste yourself you might not need all of the fish sauce as the store bought or market bought curry paste often contains more salt to help prolong its shelf life.
- 15) Lastly, add Thai sweet basil leaves and chilli slices. Stir to wilt the basil then turn off the heat.
- 16) Serve with steamed Thai jasmine rice. Enjoy!

Panang Curry Paste

INGREDIENTS

2 teaspoons coriander seeds
1/2 teaspoon cumin seeds
1/2 teaspoon white peppercorns
2-5 dried spur chilies, cut and soaked in cold water
1 teaspoon coarse sea salt
1 teaspoon mature galangal, sliced finely chopped
2 teaspoons lemongrass, thinly sliced
1 teaspoon kafir lime zest, finely chopped
1 teaspoon coriander roots, washed well and chopped finely
2 tablespoons Thai garlic, peeled
1/4 cup shallots, roughly chopped
1 teaspoon shrimp paste
1 tablespoon roasted peanuts

DIRECTIONS

Dry roast coriander seeds and cumin seeds in a pan on a medium low heat. Keep stirring and do not leave it as it will burn very quickly. Just when they start to release aroma, take off the heat. Let cool completely. Pound the seeds and the white peppercorns to fine powder in a mortar with pestle, or a coffee grinder.

In the mortar, add all the chilies and salt, pound them together until quite fine.

In this order, add galangal, lemongrass, kafir lime zest, coriander root, garlic, and shallots, pound until combine well at each addition.

Add roasted peanuts and pound until smooth.

Add shrimp paste. Pound until all combine and the paste is smooth. Use within a day or fry in oil and coconut milk and store in the freezer for about 6 months.

Chicken Panaeng Curry

INGREDIENTS:

1 cup coconut milk
1-2 Tbsp Panaeng curry paste
200g chicken breast, sliced to bite size
1/4 cup chicken stock or water
1+1/2 Tbsp fish sauce
1/2 Tbsp palm sugar
1 red Spur chili, sliced
1 Tbsp ground roasted peanut
3-4 Kaffir lime leave, thinly sliced as garnish

DIRECTIONS:

1. Add 1/4 cup of thick coconut milk in a wok, over low heat. Add curry paste, stir fry while slowly adding the remaining coconut milk. Take care not to burn the paste or let it dry out. Fry until the paste releases the spice aroma.

2. Add the chicken; stir fry until almost cooked through. Add half the stock (adjust to make the consistency you prefer, traditionally much thicker than normal Thai curry), stir and bring to a boil or until the chicken is well cooked through. Season with fish sauce and palm sugar.

3. Add the sliced red spur chili and Kafir lime leave. Stir a couple of times to release the aroma. Turn off the heat. Sprinkle with more kafir lime leaves and some ground roasted peanut to serve.

Tom Yam Gung

INGREDIENTS (2 portions):

300g medium prawns
3 cups chicken stock, prawn stock, or water
1-2 stalks of lemongrass
3 slices galangal
2 shallots, peeled and crushed
1 tsp coarse sea salt
1 1/4 cups Straw mushrooms, cleaned and halved
1 medium tomato, sliced into wedges
3 Kaffir lime leaves, spine removed and torn (plus an extra few to use as garnish)
1/2 cup fresh coriander, chopped roughly
1-5 Bird's Eye chillies
1 Tbsp fish sauce
2 Tbsp lime juice

DIRECTIONS:

1. Peel and devein the prawns. You can keep the head intact or remove them.
2. Make your own prawn stock by submerging the shells and heads in a pot with cold water and bringing to a boil for about 5 minutes. Turn off the heat and strain and discard the shells.
3. Add lemongrass, galangal, Kaffir lime leaves, shallots and salt into your stock or water. Bring to a boil and leave for a minute then add mushrooms and tomato slices.
4. Let boil for a few minutes to infuse the herb aroma into the stock, and then add the prawns.
5. As soon as the prawns turn pink on all sides, add a few extra fresh Kaffir lime leaves and turn off the heat.
6. Season with fish sauce, lime juice, chillies, and coriander. Serve immediately.

Laab Moo or Laab Gai

Minced pork (or chicken) with toasted rice powder and fresh herbs

INGREDIENTS:

1 1/2 Tbsp glutinous rice
1/4 cup water
200g minced pork or chicken
2 Tbsp shallot, thinly sliced
1/4 cup mint leaves, roughly chopped if large leaves
2 Tbsp fresh coriander, roughly chopped
2 Tbsp Sawtooth coriander, roughly chopped
2 Tbsp green onion, chopped
1 Tbsp Thai fish sauce
2 Tbsp lime juice
Chilli flakes to taste (1 tsp for medium spicy)
Serve with cabbage slices and string beans (cut into 12cm sticks)

DIRECTIONS:

- 1) Toast glutinous rice in a dry frying pan over medium low heat, moving it constantly, until golden brown. Grind with a coffee grinder or in a mortar and pestle into a sand-like texture.
- 2) In a pan, add minced pork or chicken and water and cook over medium heat. While the temperature of the pan rises you should persistently break up the meat and mix well with the water to avoid clumps. Keep stirring to break up the meat until it is fully cooked throughout. Remove from heat.
- 3) Tip the cooked pork into a mixing bowl (or leave in your pan if it is large enough to mix all other ingredients later) and leave to cool slightly while prepping the other ingredients.
- 4) Add sliced shallots, fish sauce, lime juice, ground toasted rice, and chilli flakes. Mix well, taste, and adjust to your liking.
- 5) Lastly, add coriander, green onion, and half of the mint leaves into the bowl and stir to mix.
- 6) Plate up and top with more mint leaves. Serve with string beans and thin wedges of cabbage.

Pineapple Fried Rice

INGREDIENTS

2 Tbsp vegetable oil
1 Tbsp shallots, finely chopped
2 tsp garlic, finely chopped
100g chicken breast, diced
50g Chinese sweet sausage, sliced thinly
300 g cooked rice, preferred left over, not freshly cooked
1/2 tsp turmeric powder
1/8 cup (about 20g) raisins
1/4 cup (about 40g) cashew nuts, roasted
1/2 cup (about 100g) pineapple dice
2 tsp light soy sauce
2 tsp fish sauce
1 tsp sugar
A pinch of white pepper powder
Fresh coriander, chopped, to garnish

DIRECTIONS

- 1) Fry shallots and garlic until lightly fragrant.
- 2) Add chicken and fry until almost cooked. Add sausage and fry until meat is completely cooked.
- 3) Add turmeric powder and rice, stir well to combine.
- 4) Season with soy sauce, fish sauce, and sugar.
- 5) Add pineapple and raisins; stir well. Turn off the heat.
- 6) Add pepper and cashew nuts, stir well and serve (in a pineapple shell, if desired) with fresh coriander on top.
- 7) In restaurant menus, you sometimes see it as "Pineapple baked (fried) rice". This can also be done in your kitchen by preheating the oven to 190°C. Place the fried rice in a pineapple shell and bake it for about 10 minutes and serve immediately.

Tom Kha Soup (Coconut lemongrass soup)

INGREDIENTS:

1 1/2 cup chicken stock **or water**
1 cup coconut milk
1/2 tsp salt
150g chicken breast (or protein of choice), bite-sized pieces
100g Oyster mushrooms, or Straw mushrooms, or Shimeji mushrooms
1 stalk lemongrass, smashed and cut into 5 cm pieces
3 slices galangal
3 Kaffir lime leaves
1 coriander root, crushed
1-3 chilies, bruised
1 Tbsp fish sauce (or extra 1/2 tsp salt for vegetarian)
2 Tbsp lime juice

DIRECTIONS:

- 18) In a soup pot, add **chicken stock or water**, lemongrass, galangal, Kaffir lime leaves, shallots, coriander roots, and salt.
- 19) Bring to a boil, then reduce the heat to medium, add coconut milk, mushrooms, tomato wedges, bring it to a gentle boil for a few minutes.
- 20) Add chicken (or protein of choice). Stir gently to break off the chicken pieces. Leave until the chicken is cooked well.
- 21) Season with fish sauce, lime juice, and chilies, to taste.
- 22) Turn off the heat and add chopped coriander and spring onion.
- 23) Drizzle with chili oil, if desired, and serve.

Pad See Eiw
(Stir fried rice noodles with dark soy sauce and kale)

This recipe makes about 2 Thai portions. If your wok is large you can stir fry all of it in one cooking. To make good wok-fried noodles you should NOT try to cook too much (more than 2 portions) in one time. The steam from all the ingredients pile up in the wok will prevent the “charring” that enhance the flavours, and the noodles may get soggy.

Ingredients (2 portions):

Sauce

2 Tbsp oyster sauce
1 Tbsp light soy sauce
1/2 Tbsp fish sauce
2 Tbsp dark soy sauce

* Combine all sauce ingredients in a small cup and mix well.

100g chicken, or pork, thinly sliced (or prawns and squids cut into bite size)
1 tsp light soy sauce
2 tsp dark soy sauce

* Stir the light and dark soy sauce into the meat and mix well.

2 Tbsp vegetable oil
2 cloves garlic, roughly chopped
2 eggs
4-6 stalks Chinese kale, sliced into bite size (or broccoli, or baby corns, or a mixture)
400g Guay Tiaw Sen Yai (fresh rice noodles, wide strips)
2 tsp sugar

DIRECTIONS:

- 1) In a wok over medium high heat, add the vegetable oil and wait until the oil is hot, but before smoke.
- 2) Add garlic and stir to fry for a few seconds or until it's fragrant, but before the garlic turns golden, add the meat. Stir well to combine and cooked through.
- 3) With the spatula, push the meat aside in the wok to make room for the egg. Add the eggs, break the yolks and move the wok around to let the egg run and expand to larger circle in the wok, so it's cooked evenly. Let the egg cook for 5-10 seconds or until it's just set (no more runny but still not cooked through) mix well with the meat.
- 4) Add kale or vegetables and stir to well coated with oil and turn vibrant green.
- 5) Add the noodles, the sauce, and the sugar. Stir well to make sure most of the noodles is coated with the sauce. Let the noodles sit for about 5-10 seconds then flip and leave it to char for another 5-10 seconds. Keep an eye on it, as your stove or wok might need less or more time to char nicely, without burning. You can check by lifting up and see the bottom of the noodle with a spatula, if it's not sizzling brown you can leave it a few second further. But if it's getting dark brown you should flip or stir. In home cooking where the heat is moderate, if you stir constantly your noodle will be cooked through but not charred. If you have high BTU gas stove you may stir constantly and it will take altogether about 1-2 minutes to wok up this dish.
- 6) When you have enough charring here and there throughout the noodles, remove from heat and serve.