



Nonya Laksa is a popular spicy curry noodle soup with endless variations. From the Peranakan culture, which is the merger of Chinese and Malay culture found in Singapore. Typically made with thick rice noodles, the main ingredients for this coconut curry based soup are puffs of tofu, shrimp and cockles garnished with sambal chili paste and cilantro....yum!

Hainan chicken rice is found at Hawker stalls everywhere in Singapore; this poached chicken dish originated from Hainan, and is served with fragrant rice cooked in concentrated chicken broth, ginger and garlic accompanied by a chili sauce, ginger puree and thick soy sauce and slices of cucumber.

Street Foods of Singapore

Nonya Laksa - Coconut Curry Soup with Rice Noodles

Chili Paste

- 1/4 cup dried prawns, toasted
- 2 red Fresno or serrano chilis
- 3 shallots, peeled and chopped
- 2 cloves garlic, peeled
- 1 stalk lemongrass, trimmed and chopped
- 1 tablespoon chopped galangal
- 1 tablespoon chopped cilantro stem
- 1 teaspoon ground turmeric

Seasoning

- 3 cups coconut milk
- 2 cups water
- 1/4 cup fish sauce
- 2 tablespoons lime juice
- 1 tablespoon palm sugar

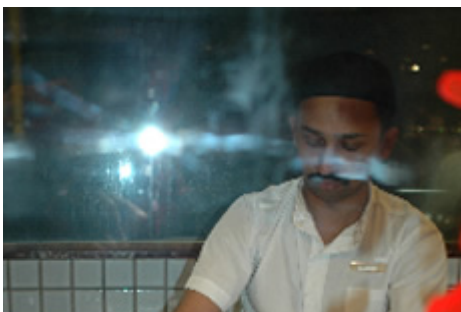
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 1/2 lb large prawns, peeled and deveined
- 1 lb mussels or clams
- 1 cup thinly sliced fish cake
- 3/4 lb fresh thin rice noodles

Garnishing

- 2 hard boiled eggs, quartered
- 1 cup bean sprouts
- 1/2 cup cucumber, peeled and julienned
- 2 spring onions, sliced thin on the bias
- 1/4 cup cilantro sprigs
- 2 tablespoons sambal chili paste

Instructions

To toast the dried prawns, heat a dry pan over medium heat and stir-fry the prawns until they turn a shade darker, 3 to 5 minutes. Remove the prawns from the pan, let cool and blend in a mini-food processor to a coarse powder and set aside.





With a blender or mini-food processor, grind together all the ingredients for the chili paste with 2 tablespoons of water to form a smooth paste. In a large sauce pan, heat 2 tablespoons of oil over high heat stir in the ground prawns and add the chili paste and saute until fragrant, 2 minutes. Add the coconut milk, water, fish sauce, lime juice and palm sugar and bring to a low boil for 2 minutes and then reduce the heat to low and simmer for 10 minutes.

To cook the noodles and seafood, bring a large pot of water and 1 teaspoon of salt to a boil over high heat. Cook the noodles until they are just done, 2 to 3 minutes. Drain the noodles and divide them into warmed soup bowls. In the same pot, bring a quart of water to a boil. Reduce the heat to low and poach the prawns until they just turn opaque, 1 minute. Remove them with a slotted spoon to a large bowl. Add the fish cake to the same poaching liquid for 1 minute. Transfer them to the bowl of shrimp. Then add the mussels to the pot and cook until the shells just open, 2 to 3 minutes. Remove the mussels to the bowl of seafood and discard the poaching liquid.

To serve the noodle soup, right before serving, add all the seafood to the simmering curry soup to heat through, 3 minutes. Use tongs to top each bowl of noodles with a variety of seafood and use a ladle to pour the hot coconut curry broth over the seafood. Generously top each bowl with the wedges of egg, beansprouts, cucumber, green onions, cilantro and a 1/2 teaspoon dollop of sambal chili paste. Serve immediately.

Makes 4 to 6 servings.

Hainan Chicken Rice

Ingredients

- 1 3-1/2 lb whole chicken
- 3 tablespoons kosher salt
- 3 stalks green onions, smashed
- 3 1/4 inch slices ginger, smashes
- 4 stalks cilantro

Seasoned Rice

- 2 tablespoons canola oil
- 2 shallots, minced
- 2 cloves garlic minced
- 1 tablespoon minced ginger
- 1 1/2 cups long grain jasmine rice
- 2 1/2 cups chicken broth
- 1 teaspoon sesame oil
- 1/2 teaspoon salt

Chili Sauce

- 4 red Fresno chiles, seeded
- 1 teaspoon tomato paste
- 2 cloves minced garlic
- 1 tablespoon rice vinegar
- 1/2 teaspoon sugar
- 2 tablespoons canola oil

Garnishing

- 3 shallots, thinly sliced and deep fried until crisp
- 1 cup cucumbers, peeled and thinly sliced on the bias

Instructions

To poach the chicken, bring a large stock pot of water to a boil over high heat. Add the salt, green onions, ginger and cilantro. Carefully immerse the chicken cavity side down in the boiling water and bring to a second boil, about 5 minutes. Turn off the heat, cover the pot with a tight lid and let the chicken poach for 50 minutes. Do not lift the lid.

To make the seasoned rice, place a large sauce pan over medium heat and add 2 tablespoons of oil to the pan. Fry the shallots, garlic and ginger until fragrant and then add the rice to the aromatics, stirring until the rice is well coated with oil. Add the chicken broth and the sesame oil and bring the rice to a boil. Reduce the heat to low, stir the rice and cover with a lid. Let steam for 25 minutes and keep the rice covered until ready to serve.

To make the chili sauce, place the chilis, tomato paste, garlic, vinegar and sugar in a blender and process until a smooth paste forms. Heat a small skillet over medium-high heat, add 2 tablespoons of oil and fry the chili paste until it begins to thicken, about 3 minutes. Transfer the chili sauce to a small bowl.

To serve, carefully remove the chicken from the poaching liquid and let rest for 10 minutes. With a pair of poultry shears, cut the chicken into pieces with the bone. Transfer the chicken to a warm platter and garnish with fried shallots and cucumber slices. Serve with the warm rice and chili paste.

Singapore Chili Crab

Ingredients

- 2 lbs (1 large or 2 small) live Dungeness crabs
- 1/4 cup cornstarch
- 1/4 cup canola oil

Chili Paste

- 1/2 cup minced shallots
- 1 tablespoons minced ginger
- 4 cloves garlic, minced
- 2 red Fresno chiles, seeded and minced
- 1/4 teaspoon ground black pepper
- 1/2 teaspoon shrimp paste

Seasoning Sauce

- 1/2 cup water
- 1 tablespoon rice vinegar
- 1 tablespoon tomato paste
- 3 tablespoon light soy sauce
- 1 tablespoon sugar
- 1/4 teaspoon cornstarch
- 2 tablespoons minced cilantro

Instructions

Clean the crabs by removing the carapace. Pull away and discard the spongy gills and cut the body in half and then cut the halves in 4 pieces with the legs attached to the body. Crack the claws with a mallet, rinse the pieces of crab and pat very dry.

To make the chili paste, use a mortar and pestle or mini-food processor to grind the chili paste ingredients into a thick paste. To make the seasoning sauce, in a small bowl combine the water with tomato paste, soy sauce and sugar.

Heat a wok or large saute pan over high heat. Once the pan is very hot, coat

the crab pieces in corn starch and shake off the excess. Add 3 tablespoons of oil to the pan and stir-fry the crab until the shell begins to turn orange and brown on the edges, 5 to 7 minutes. Transfer the crab to a bowl and reheat the same wok over high heat. When the pan is hot, add 1 tablespoon of oil to the pan and stir in the chili paste sauteing until fragrant, several seconds. Quickly return the crab to the wok and toss well with the chili paste until the crab is well coated. Pour the seasoning sauce over the crab and continue to stir-fry until the sauce thickens and the crab is cooked through, 4 to 5 minutes. Stir in the fresh cilantro and transfer the crab to a warmed platter. Serve right away.

Makes 4 to 6 servings.

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