

Thai Stuffed Omelette

2 eggs per person
1 red shallot
1 clove garlic
1 tbsp. coriander roots, chopped
1/2 tsp. white peppercorns
1 cup raw minced pork
6 cherry tomatoes, halved
1 tbsp. green capsicum, diced
1 tsp. palm sugar
2 tbsp. fish sauce
2 tbsp. vegetable oil
coriander leaves
red chilli shreds
Serves 4

Dipping Sauce
2 or 3 fresh red chillies, sliced
2 tbsp. fish sauce
1 tsp. lime juice
Combine all three ingredients in a small bowl

Pound the garlic, shallot, coriander roots and peppercorns to a coarse paste in a mortar. Heat 1 tbsp. of the vegetable oil in a pan and fry the paste in it until fragrant. Add the minced pork or chicken and stir fry until cooked through. Add tomatoes and diced green pepper. Cook for a few moments and then add palm sugar and 1 tbsp. fish sauce. Stir well, then remove from the heat and set aside.

To make each omelette, beat two eggs lightly with 1/2 tsp fish sauce.



Heat a little oil in a clean non stick pan and pour in the beaten egg mixture.

When the eggs begin to set, place 2 tbsp of the pork mixture in the centre of the omelette and fold the eggs over to form a square parcel.

Use a plate to invert the omelette and fry the other side to seal and finish cooking.

Remove to a serving dish and garnish with chilli shreds and coriander leaves and serve with steamed rice and dipping sauce.

Warm Bananas and Corn in Coconut Milk

2 tbsp. granulated sugar
1 tbsp. palm sugar
large pinch salt
1 tsp. lime juice
2 cups white coconut milk
1 cob fresh corn
6 ripe but firm bananas (not sugar bananas, which turn astringent when cooked)

Stir sugar, salt and lime juice together over low heat until the sugar has melted. Add the coconut milk and bring to the boil. Cut the corn niblets from the cob.

Peel and slice the bananas lengthwise and then across to obtain four pieces from each fruit.

Add the corn and banana pieces to the simmering coconut milk mixture and cook gently for a few minutes until soft but not mushy. Serve warm.



Beef Larb

400 grams minced beef
2 tbsp. ground roasted sticky rice (available from Vietnamese groceries)
1 tsp. ground dried red chilli
2 tbsp. fish sauce
1 tbsp. lime juice
6 spring onions, sliced
1 bunch long coriander, shredded
1 tbsp. mint leaves
Wedges of raw white cabbage and other raw vegetables such as long beans, cucumber, cherry tomatoes.

Bring 2 tbsp water to the boil in a wok. Add the minced beef, stirring well to break up the mass and keep stirring until the beef is cooked.

Off the heat, add the roasted rice, ground chilli, fish sauce and lime juice. Stir in the spring onion, long coriander and mint, mixing well. Taste and add more lime juice or fish sauce if needed.

Serve with a selection of raw vegetables and steamed sticky rice.



Steamed Mussels with Lemongrass

500 gm. mussels in the shell, well scrubbed and debearded
4 slices galangal
2 stalks lemon grass, cut in 5 cm lengths and lightly crushed
2 tbsp. kaffir lime leaves, shredded
1 cup water

In a shallow pan able to take all the mussels, bring the water to the boil. Add the galangal, lemon grass and lime leaves and simmer for a few minutes.

Add the mussels, cover the pan and simmer, shaking occasionally, for about 3 min or until all the mussels have opened.

Dipping Sauce

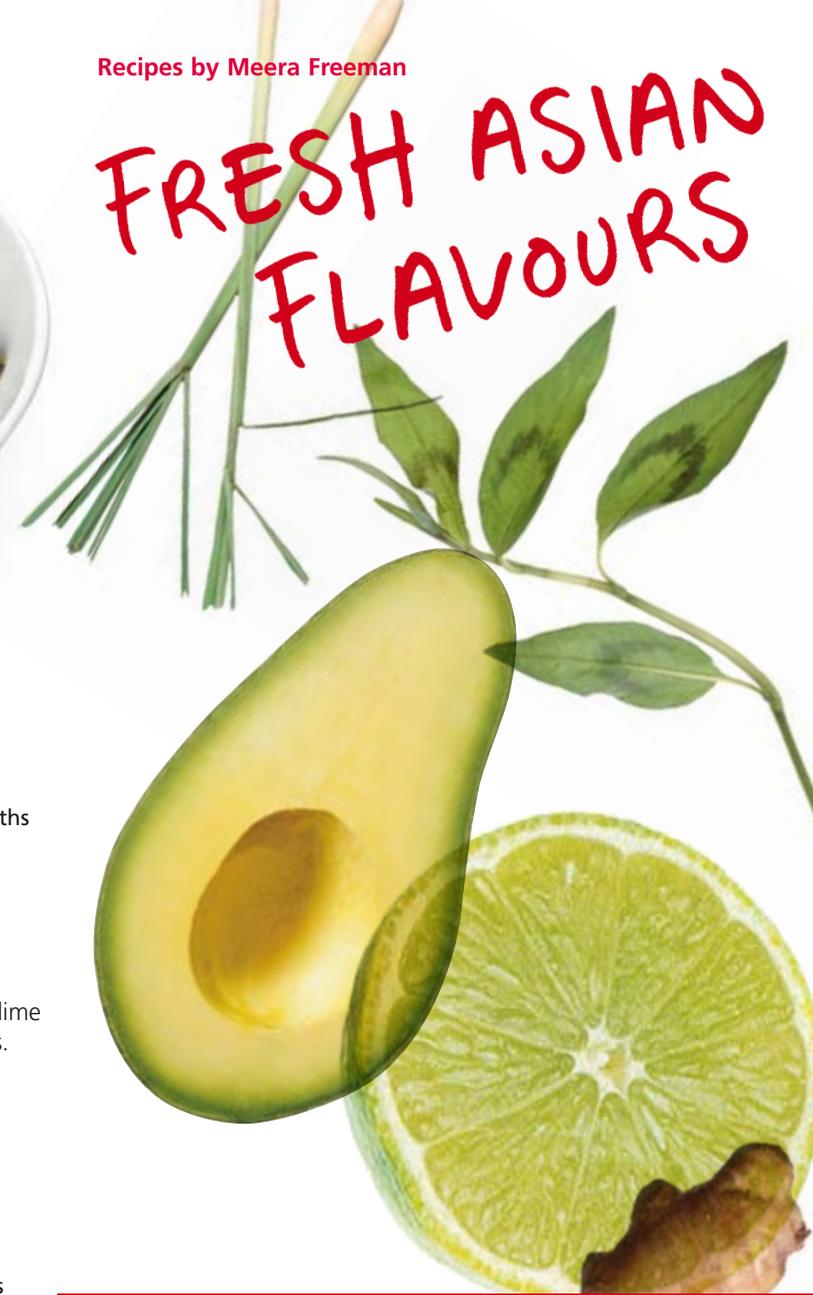
1 clove garlic
2 sliced fresh, large, red (mild) chillies
1 tsp. palm sugar
2 tbsp. fish sauce
2 tbsp. lime juice

In a mortar, pound the garlic, chillies and palm sugar to blend and add the lime juice and fish sauce to obtain a smooth sauce.



Recipes by Meera Freeman

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Vietnamese Chicken and Sweet Potato Curry

- 1 kg chicken thigh, cut into bite size pieces
- 4 cloves garlic
- 1/2 onion, chopped
- 1 5cm piece fresh ginger
- 3 tablespoons sugar
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 2 tablespoons curry powder
- 3 tablespoon corn oil
- 3 stalks lemon grass cut into 3 pieces each and lightly crushed
- 1 teaspoon dried chilli
- 2 or 3 orange sweet potatoes peeled and cut into chunks
- 2 cups water
- 1 cup coconut milk
- rice paddy herb or coriander leaves

Dry the chicken pieces well and place in a deep dish. In a food processor, blend the garlic, onion and ginger to a fine paste. Stir in the salt, sugar and curry powder and add to the chicken pieces, stirring to coat well. Marinate them in this mixture for at least one hour.

In a saucepan, heat the oil and fry the marinated chicken until fragrant. Lower the heat, add the crushed lemon grass, dried chilli, sweet potatoes and water and simmer for about 20 min. Add the coconut milk and simmer for a further 5 min over very low heat. Garnish with rice paddy herb or coriander leaves and serve with crusty French bread or steamed rice.

Steamed Fish with Ginger and Spring Onion

- 1 whole fish or 4 thick fillets of fish eg. blue eye
- 1 tablespoon soy sauce
- 2 cloves garlic, sliced
- 4 spring onions, shredded
- 1 tbsp fresh ginger, finely shredded
- 1/2 bunch coriander leaves and stems
- 1 tablespoon vegetable oil

Place half the garlic, ginger and coriander on a plate. Put the fish on top. Sprinkle with the soy sauce. Place in a steamer for about 10 min or until cooked through.

Transfer to a serving plate. Place the remaining garlic, ginger and spring onion on top. Heat the oil to smoking and pour over the fish. Garnish with remaining coriander.



Avocado Smoothy

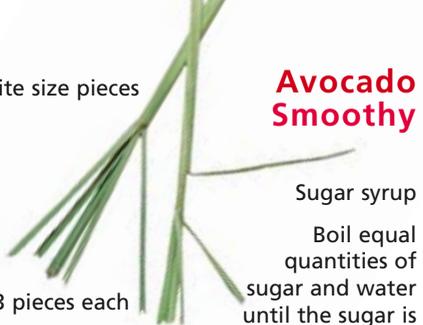
- 1 small ripe avocado
- 2 tablespoons sugar syrup
- 6 ice cubes
- 1 teaspoon condensed milk (or dairy whitener)

Sugar syrup
Boil equal quantities of sugar and water until the sugar is dissolved and the syrup is clear.

Remove the flesh from the avocado half and place in the jar of a blender with the rest of the ingredients.

Blend until a pale green creamy mixture is obtained. Serve in a tall glass with a long spoon or straw.

Thin with water or milk if the smoothy is too thick.



Chicken Salad

- 1 chicken breast
- 1/2 cup rice vinegar
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 1/2 teaspoon pepper
- 3 tablespoons sugar
- 1 onion, cut in half and thinly sliced, crosswise
- 1 Lebanese cucumber
- 1 carrot, grated
- 1 tbsp fish sauce
- 2 tablespoons shredded Vietnamese mint
- 1 tablespoon shredded mint leaves
- 2 shiso leaves, shredded
- 1/2 red chilli, seeded and finely chopped
- 1/2 cup chopped fried peanuts
- 1 tablespoon crisp fried shallots

Poach chicken in some salted water until just cooked through. Drain, remove skin and set aside to cool.

Mix the vinegar with the salt, pepper and sugar and marinate the sliced onion in this mixture for at least 30 min.

Pull the cooled chicken into shreds with your fingers and mix with the cucumber and carrot. Add the marinated onion slices together with their juice and the fish sauce.

Add the shredded herbs, chilli and peanuts tossing to combine. Garnish with the crisp fried shallots. Serve with some freshly fried prawn crackers if desired.



HELPFUL HINTS

- Blanch vegetables for 30 seconds in boiling water before stir-frying to reduce cooking time and keep their colour fresh and green.
- Freeze left over curry and other pastes to keep fresh for future use.
- To make Asian chicken stock, simmer 2 chicken carcasses with a piece of ginger, 1 unpeeled brown onion, salt and 1 tbsp sugar for 2 hours.
- When cutting chillies, wear disposable gloves to avoid burning your fingers.
- When preparing noodle soups, to avoid cloudy stock, blanch noodles in boiling water and then pour stock over.
- Use scissors to trim coriander leaves to prevent grit from getting under your fingernails.
- When picking herbs, place picked leaves in bowl of cold water to keep fresh until ready to use.
- Heat the wok before adding oil to prevent food from sticking.
- Wrap galagal in paper towel and place in a sealed plastic bag to keep for 2 weeks. Do not refrigerate.
- When blanching seafood, add 1 tsp rice vinegar to the water to keep the seafood fresh in colour and taste.



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