

Chicken Green Curry

In Thailand, I kept trying other meals but I kept returning to their well known green curry. The term curry is something of a misnomer being borrowed from Indian cuisine by the British. The Thai name refers to a spice paste made from green chillis. This recipe is a development of a green curry by Nigel Slater.

Planning

serves:	4
prep time:	1 hr mins
cooking time:	45 mins

Ingredients

4 fresh lemongrass stalks
6 medium-hot green chillies
3 cloves garlic, peeled and crushed
5 cm piece fresh ginger, peeled and chopped
2 shallots, peeled and chopped
4 tbs fresh coriander, chopped
1 tsp ground cumin
1 tsp ground coriander
zest and juice of 1 lime
1 tbs Thai fish sauce
½ tsp ground black pepper
1 free range chicken
3 tbs groundnut oil
8 - 10 Thai aubergines
400 ml tinned coconut milk
400 ml home-made chicken stock
8 lime leaves
1 tbs Thai fish sauce
1 tbs brined green peppercorns, drained
~20g basil leaves, shredded
~20g fresh coriander, chopped

Method

First, make the green curry paste. Slice the lemongrass as finely as you can. According to preference, with or without the seeds, chop the green chillies. Place the lemongrass and chillies, together with the other ingredients down to and including the black pepper, into a food processor. Blitz this lot together, scraping down the sides regularly, until you have a thick paste. (You can add a little water to help slacken it if necessary.) Cover and refrigerate this until you need it.

Butcher the chicken. Remove the skin and bone from the breasts and legs (just joint the wings). Cut the chicken meat into bite-size pieces. Lightly brown the chicken in the groundnut oil, then drain and reserve. (Make chicken stock from the carcass and bones.)

Wash, trim and quarter the Thai aubergines, then quickly fry them in the pan you used to brown the chicken. Add the coconut milk, stock, lime leaves, four heaped tablespoons of the chilli paste, fish sauce, peppercorns and half the chopped herbs. Bring to the boil and simmer for about 10 mins. Return the chicken to the pan with two more tablespoons chilli paste, stir and simmer for a further 15 mins stirring occasionally. Stir in the remaining herbs and serve with boiled Thai fragrant rice.

(If you can't get Thai aubergines, about 200g fine green beans would be a suitable, reasonably authentic substitute - they are like the Thai long beans. In this case, don't fry off the beans, just wash them and cut them into about 3 cm lengths, then add them to the curry along with the chicken.)