

Chicken Satay

It's amazing how many recipes for this use peanut butter as a base. I realize that peanut butter is pure peanuts, or should be, but I think a little texture might be lacking, even with chunky peanut butter. Therefore, I went for a recipe starting with whole peanuts. I've done this as a starter though the peanut sauce quantity would be plenty for four as a main course.

Planning

serves:	4
prep time:	2½ hrs
cooking time:	10 mins

Ingredients

100ml + 2tbs dark soy sauce
3 tbs molasses cane sugar
5 cloves garlic, crushed
juice of a lemon
5tbs groundnut oil
2 chicken breasts, skinned & filleted
250g roasted, unsalted peanuts.
2 fresh red bird's eye chillis, deseeded if you prefer.
1 onion, roughly chopped
1tbs soft brown sugar
water
Salt

Method

Marinating the chicken. Dissolve the molasses cane sugar in 100ml of the dark soy sauce. Stir in 2 crushed cloves of garlic, ½ the lemon juice and 1 tablespoon of groundnut oil then set this marinade aside while you work on the chicken. Cut the chicken breast meat into ~2cm cubes and thread them on wooden skewers/satay sticks. Put the skewers of chicken on a shallow dish/plate and pour over the marinade. Turning occasionally, marinate the chicken for two hours or so.

The peanut sauce. Skin the peanuts if necessary. Put the peanuts, red chillis, remaining 3 garlic cloves, onion and a teaspoon of salt in a blender/liquidiser. Add 2 tablespoons groundnut oil then blitz it all together adding just enough water to prevent the liquidiser from sticking. [Slaves to originality could smash this paste together in a large pestle and mortar, should they be that desperate.] Heat two more tablespoons groundnut oil in a small saucepan and when hot add the nut paste. Reduce the heat and fry for three minutes. Keeping the paste quite thick at this stage, stir in a little more water and cook for a further five minutes until thick and smooth. Remove the pan from the heat. Dissolve the soft brown sugar in the 2 tablespoons dark soy sauce before stirring this and the remaining juice of ½ lemon into the peanut mixture. Adjust the salt and lemon juice to taste. Set aside.

When you're ready to eat, reheat the peanut sauce over a gentle heat stirring in enough water to slacken it off to a usable consistency (you decide). In increasing order of preference, either under a grill (if necessary), on a ridged griddle pan (much better) or, (if you're really lucky) on a charcoal barbecue, cook the marinated chicken skewers on high heat for five minutes or so, checking (obviously) that they are then cooked through. (You are after some nice tinged crusty bits.)

Serve the chicken skewers with some of the peanut sauce separately in individual saucers.