

Tuna with JC's Thai Salad

This is my modification of one of Rick Stein's excellent ideas. Rick (or should I say Mr Stein?) makes a noodle salad but I prefer this variation using blanched oriental vegetables. The tuna needs to be thick enough (1 inch or more) to glaze it in the sauce. If it's thinner, to avoid overcooking, just sear it plain on a very hot ridged griddle pan. (Or of course, if you prefer it plain, just griddle it anyway!)

Planning

serves:	4
prep time:	10 mins
cooking time:	20 mins

Ingredients

1 lb bean sprouts
4 oz mangetout or snow peas
4 oz baby sweetcorn
2 mild red chillies
1 bunch fresh coriander
juice and zest of 1 lime
2 tbs Thai fish sauce
2 tsp toasted sesame oil
2 tbsp sunflower oil
4 thick tuna steaks
6 tbs. dark soy sauce (optional)
4 tbs balsamic vinegar (optional)

Method

First, make the salad. Cut the peas and sweetcorn into 1½ cm pieces. Drop them into a large pan of boiling, salted water over high heat. As soon as it returns to the boil, add the bean sprouts. When it returns to the boil again, drain the vegetables and refresh them immediately in cold water to arrest the cooking. When cool, dry them in a salad spinner and add to a salad bowl. Deseed and finely chop the fresh chillis and add these to the salad. Strip the coriander leaves and add these whole to the salad, too.

Now make the salad dressing. Mix the lime juice and zest, Thai fish sauce, sesame and sunflower oils, and let them infuse until you are ready to serve. Do not dress the salad until immediately before serving.

If you are doing the tuna with the sauce, mix the soy sauce and balsamic vinegar together. Lightly oil a frying pan and set it over moderately high heat. When hot, drop in the tuna steaks and flash fry them on both sides just to seal them. Throw in the sauce mixture keeping the heat up. It will bubble vigorously and start reducing. Turn the tuna steaks a couple of times to get both sides well coated with the glaze as it reduces. It should take about 2-3 minutes.

Alternatively, without the sauce option, heat your griddle pan and sear the tuna on both sides. Either way, please make sure you leave the tuna very pink in the middle.

Dress the salad and serve it with your chosen tuna.