

Miele

Fried fish collars with palm sugar and tamarind caramel and soft herb salad

By Palisa Anderson

15 minutes, plus soaking and salting time

Preparation Time

2 hrs 20 minutes

Cooking Time

6 (as part of a Thai banquet)

Serves



INGREDIENTS

Palm sugar and tamarind caramel

45 g piece tamarind pulp
375 ml (1 ½ cup) lukewarm water
300 g palm sugar
8 shallots
6 cm piece mature galangal (30 g),
skin on, thickly sliced
5 coriander roots
2 lemongrass stalks, white part only,
cut into 5 cm lengths
8 makrut lime leaves
8 pandan leaves
80 ml (? cup) fish sauce, or more
to taste

Fish collars

1 kg fish collars
½ tsp salt flakes
500 ml (2 cups) avocado oil or lard
2 dried long chillies

Soft herb salad

1 cup coriander stems and leaves,
roughly chopped
1 cup Thai basil, destemmed
and decrowned
1 cup mint leaves
6 large butter lettuce leaves, torn
3 spring onions, cut into 1 cm pieces
1 cup dill fronds
6 makrut lime leaves,
very thinly sliced
2 limes, zest and juiced

METHOD

Palm sugar and tamarind caramel

1. Soak the tamarind pulp in a bowl with the lukewarm water for 20 minutes, press the pulp to break up.
2. Pour the tamarind mix through a fine sieve over a bowl. Use a spatula to press the tamarind pulp through the sieve. Discard the solids and reserve the liquid.
3. Place the palm sugar in a saucepan. Melt the sugar on low heat, induction setting 4 for approximately 10 minutes.
4. Meanwhile, using a mortar and pestle, flatten the shallots, galangal, coriander roots, lemongrass, makrut lime leaves and pandan leaves.
5. Add the aromatics to the sugar, reduce the heat to low, induction setting 3, and cook for 1 hour, or until the caramel thickens.
6. Add the tamarind liquid and fish sauce to the caramel, taste and add more fish sauce if needed. Continue cooking on low heat, induction setting 4 for 1 hour, or until the sauce reduces to a caramel consistency.
7. Pour the sauce through a fine sieve over a bowl. Use a spatula to press all the caramel out of the pulp. Discard solids and reserve the caramel.

Fish collars

1. Descale the collars completely, and pat dry. Lightly rub the salt on the entire surface and set aside for at least an hour before cooking, to dry out.
2. Set aside metal tongs to turn the fish and a baking rack with a baking tray underneath ready for the fish to rest on after it comes out of the fryer.
3. Place the oil into the wok and heat on high heat, induction setting 8. When the oil is hot add the chillies and fry for 30 seconds, or until the chilli puffs up. Set aside to use as garnish.
4. Gently slide the fish into the fat and watch carefully, staying with the cooktop to ensure that the fish does not burn. Frying time will depend on the thickness of the fish, though generally it should take approximately 5-10 minutes, provided you start with hot oil. Turn the fish after checking for colour, it should start to turn golden brown evenly, that will be your cue to turn the fish. Cooking the second side should take less time than the first. Don't wait until your fish is too dark before taking it out, as it still keeps colouring once out of the fryer.

Herb salad

1. Mix all of the soft herbs and lettuce and break up the fried chilli and gently fold through with ½ cup of the caramel and the lime zest and juice.

To serve

1. Place the collars onto the serving plate, drizzle with the palm sugar and tamarind caramel and serve with the salad.

Hints and tips

- Any sustainable fish can be used in this recipe; however, Palisa prefers line caught snapper, yellow fin tuna or Spanish Mackerel.
- This recipe uses the same sauce as the Son-in-law eggs. It's great on many Thai dishes.