

# **The Best Asian Food Recipes**



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# TASTE OF ASIAN FOOD

## How To Cook Authentic & Fusion Asian Food



### A BRIEF INTRODUCTION

Dim sum is a delightfully delicious Chinese cuisine, usually served with tea. It literally translates to "touch the heart," which means "take what your heart picks." The culinary art of preparing dim sum has been long-held by the Cantonese in Southern China.



Cha siu bao or char siu bao ( ) is the most famous classic Cantonese dim sum.

Delectable and exotic, a meal of dim sum can truly be one of the best you've ever had. It is a bun (Bao) filled with BBQ pork. BBQ pork is called cha siu in Chinese, hence the name Char Siu Bao. It is normally eaten some time from morning to early afternoon and usually served with Chinese tea, which is called yum cha ( drinking tea ) by the people in Hong Kong. Nowadays, you can also find char siu bao in many lunch menus in Chinese restaurants all over the world.

The buns are steamed with high heat to enable the dough to expand rapidly and burst open at the top, revealing the meat filling inside partially. Char siu bao is best to serve hot straight from the steamer.

Char siu bao is considered as part of the Malaysian food family, although it is originated from China. It is hard to find any Malaysian Chinese never try this fabulous dim sum before. We use chicken meat instead of pork so that it is suitable for people from all races and religion. The buns of the classic recipe are filled with the stir-fried trimmings of roasted pork butt which is slightly fatty but tender.

The technique of making the dough is somewhat different from other western pastries, as it utilizes multiple types of leavening agents to achieve the tender, bouncy and bursting surface. It is also a far healthier way of cooking as it does not involve baking. The buns are cooked in less than ten minutes due to the intense heat generated by the steam in the enclosed steamer.



# TASTE OF ASIAN FOOD

## How To Cook Authentic & Fusion Asian Food



### INGREDIENTS

#### Pastry :

Pao flour	188g
Yeast	9g
Lukewarm water	270g
Baking powder	9g

**A**

Icing sugar	135g
Pao flour	383g
Vinegar	0.25tsp
Ammonium bicarbonate	0.2 tsp
Shortening	45g
Salt	2g

**B**

#### Filling :

Chicken	400g
Sugar	70g
Cornstarch	12g
Water	200g
Oyster sauce	70g
Light soya sauce	24g
Dark soya sauce	36g
Onion	50g
5 spices powder	1tsp
Oil	44g

**C**

### COOKING INSTRUCTIONS

#### Fillings:

- 1 Heat the oil in a pan, sauté the onion for 1 to 2 minutes. Add the diced chicken breast meat and sauté until the chicken is cooked through.
- 2 Add the remaining ingredients. Stir and cook until the gravy is thickened.
- 3 Transfer to a plate and allow to cool.

#### Pastry:

- 1 Dissolve the dry yeast in water.
- 2 Add the pao flour and icing sugar. Mixed well and leave it for at least an hour.
- 3 Add the remaining items into the starter mixture and knead for about 8 to 10 minutes.
- 4 Cover the dough with a piece of damp cloth and let it prove for 30 minutes, or until it double in size.
- 5 Divide the dough into 50g per portion. Let the dough rest and relax for 10 minutes.
- 6 Flatten the dough with a rolling pin to form a circle of 8-10 cm in diameter. Place 30g of filling in the middle, wrap and pleat the dough to seal. Place it on a 1.5" square parchment paper, seal side up.
- 7 Place the baos into a steamer, leave about 2-3 cm gap in between the baos. Steam in a preheated steamer on high heat for 8 minutes.
- 8 Remove the baos immediately from the steamer and cool them on a rack to prevent the bottom of the baos become soggy.

# TASTE OF ASIAN FOOD

How To Cook Authentic & Fusion Asian Food



## THE FINE ART OF MAKING CHAR SIU BAO

### How To Make Char Siu -

Traditionally, barbecue pork (char siu) is used. We use chicken breast meat in this recipe as it is a universal meat that is suitable for all races and religion. Most of the Halal restaurant in Malaysia served Char Siu Bao prepared with chicken meat.

You can buy the ready-made Char Siu from any Chinese eateries for convenience. You can also follow our formula to prepare your own.

When you prepare your own filling, there are a few points that you need to take note:

1. Sauté the onion until it turns fragrant before adding the chicken meat.
2. You can combine the corn flour into the water to form a paste before mixing with the meat, or you can just mix EVERYTHING together. It really does not matter.



3. You can use additional water to cook the chicken if you want. It is important to form a thick gravy so that the filling of the bao is 'juicy'.

**Flour** - The correct choice of flour is essential for the success of making Char Siu Bao. I have seen different types of flour being used by various chefs, and hence I would like to elaborate a little on this subject.

Freshly milled flour is bleached and the natural color is yellowish. Bleaching will not only whitens the flour to make it more appealing, it also breaks down the gluten level further and makes the flour softer. Wheat flour contains protein and when it contacts with water, it develops gluten, which gives elasticity and strength to baked goods. Different baking items need different percentage of protein for optimum gluten development. Here is the summary:

Cake Flour - 6-8% protein

Pastry Flour, Pao flour, Hong Kong flour (also known as Waterlily Flour) - 8-10% protein

Self-Rising Flour - 8-9% protein

All-Purpose and Plain Flour - 10-12% protein

Bread Flour - 12-14% protein



# TASTE OF ASIAN FOOD

## How To Cook Authentic & Fusion Asian Food



## THE FINE ART OF MAKING CHAR SIU BAO

**The choice of flour** for making Char Siu Bao is Pao flour or Hong Kong flour. The percentage of protein of these types of flour is suitable to produce the correct amount of gluten required for fluffy and soft buns. Both are also bleached and are able to produce white buns normally available in dim sum store. The difference between Bao flour and Hong Kong flour is that Yeast is added to Pao flour, whereas it is not in the case of Hong Kong flour. You may also use cake flour that contains the similar percentage of gluten, which will result the same fluffiness and softness as Pao and Hong Kong flour, but the color will be slightly yellowish.

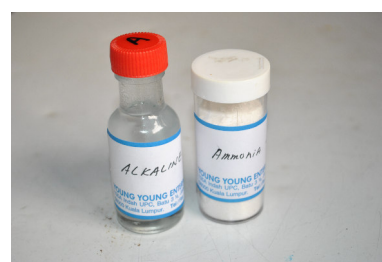
**Making the dough** - Dough making is quite similar to making bread. Some chefs prefer to prepare a starter just like making bread. In this case, part of the flour will be used to prepare the starter. The flour will ferment longer resulting buns with better flavor.

**Wheat starch** ( ) can be added in a smaller amount into the recipe. Wheat starch can produce a very soft and fluffy texture since wheat starch has no protein.

**Vinegar** is added for a purpose. Since wheat starch has no protein, and Pao or Hong Kong flour has a low-protein content, the development of gluten that contributes to the strength, and texture will be limited. The ideal pH for gluten development is 5-6. This will encourage gluten development and produce a more extensible (easier to stretch) dough. Vinegar helps to maintain the pH of the dough so that it is not too alkaline due to the use of baking powder and ammonium bicarbonate. This will produce Bao with good texture and yet is fluffy and soft.

**Ammonium bicarbonate** (commonly known as In Chinese ) is a leavening agent that is seldom used nowadays. It is also hardly used in any western baking products. However, it is required to produce the signature bursting surface. The professional finishing of Char Siu Bao should be bursted ( ) into three or four parts on the surface, much like the crevices on top of a hot cross bun. It is created by using ammonium bicarbonate instead of cutting lines on the surface as for breads.

**Lye water** ( ) - some recipe suggest to add lye water into the dough. Our recipe has no lye water. There is a danger to add too much lye water as the Bao will have a bitter taste.



# TASTE OF ASIAN FOOD

How To Cook Authentic & Fusion Asian Food



## THE FINE ART OF MAKING CHARSIU BAO

**How to produce a white bun** - A number of recipes and chefs suggest that vinegar can 'whitened' the dough. However, we have tried to make Bao with and without vinegar, and the color of the Bao is exactly the same!

The answer of the snowy white Bao lies on the color of the flour and oil that you use. Hong Kong flour and Pao flour are bleached and will produce white Bao. If you use the normal cake flour or all-purpose flour, the color of the Bao will be slightly yellowish.

Please also note the oil you use. If you use vegetable oil or animal oil, the Bao will be slightly yellowish. We use shortening from soy origin to produce a snowy white Bao. If you want to use the healthier alternative, such as unbleached flour and vegetable oil instead of bleached flour and shortening, the flavor will not be affected. The Bao, however, will not be as white as those you can expect from the professional dim sum shop.



### How to wrap the filling

1. Roll out the dough to a round shape, but leave the center slightly thicker as this will be the bottom part of the Bao.
2. It is not necessary to seal the Bao dough tightly, just fold and squeeze slightly with your fingers is sufficient. This is different from shaping pie crust, where the line formed by you will stay even after baking. Most of the folding lines will disappear after steaming since there are both baking powder and yeast as leavening agents. It is acceptable (traditionally) if the dough is 'erupted' due to rapid expansion of volume during steaming and reveal part of the filling.

### To steam the Bao

1. Place each Bao seal side up on a small piece of oiled baking paper.
2. Place the Bao in a steamer tray. Make sure the water is boiled rapidly.
3. Steam the Bao with high heat and with plenty of water, covered at all times during the entire steaming process.





# TASTE OF ASIAN FOOD

How To Cook Authentic & Fusion Asian Food



## A BRIEF INTRODUCTION

Butter Prawn is a Malaysian creation that is best to showcase the unique amalgamation of the best of Malay, Chinese, Indian, and western cooking culture. It is aesthetically pleasant, fully of buttery flavor with the unmistakable aroma of the curry leaves. It is a knockout dish in terms of taste, flavor, and presentation.



Butter prawns capture the essence of Chinese, Indian and Western cooking resulting in a to-die-for culinary creation. The Chinese has reinvented the classic prawn dishes by using butter to deep fry the egg yolk and imbue the exotic curry flavor into the prawn by using fresh curry leaves. It is prepared by using traditional deep frying and stir frying Chinese cooking technique. The prawns are deep fried, and then stir fry with a mixture of oats, milk powder and seasonings. Lastly, it is coated with the pre-prepared egg yolk floss. The creation of floss-like strands of egg yolk is a technique that hardly found in other culinary cultures. Chopped bird's-eye chili are added to enhance the presentation at the end.

You need to master the technique that is used to create the egg floss. Other than that, it is quite a straightforward method. You can find this dish in most of the Malaysian Chinese restaurant throughout the country. Other variations include creating butter prawns without the oat, or add some salted egg into the mixture to create an even more exotic flavor.



# TASTE OF ASIAN FOOD

How To Cook Authentic & Fusion Asian Food



## INGREDIENTS

- Prawn 500g A
- Egg yolk 3 pieces B
- Margarine / butter for frying egg
- Butter for stir frying prawns 30g
- Curry leaves 3 stalks C
- Sugar 10g
- Milk powder 15g
- Salt 3g
- White pepper powder 1/4 teaspoon
- Oats 24g
- Chilli padi (bird-'s-eye chili) 2 pieces

## COOKING INSTRUCTIONS

- 1 Wash the prawns. Cut away and discard the head of the prawns partially. Cut a slit at the back of the prawn and deveined the prawn.
- 2 Deep fry the prawns in hot oil for 3 minutes. Drained.
- 3 Mix all the ingredients in C
- 4 Remove the leafs from the stalks of curry leafs. Discard the stalks.
- 5 Cut the bird-'s-eye chillies into small pieces.
- 6 Separate the yolk from the egg white. Beat the egg yolks until homogenous. Pour the egg yolk in a small stream into butter or margarine. Stir the eggs in the oil with a beater in circular motion to form streaks of egg yolk.
- 7 Heat up the butter in the wok, sauté the curry leaves until it smells fragrant. Add the prawns, the mixture as in C and stir fry at low heat until the prawns are coated with the ingredients evenly.
- 8 Add the streaks of egg yolk and mix with the prawns evenly. Garnish the prawns with the bird-'s-eye chili.



# TASTE OF ASIAN FOOD

How To Cook Authentic & Fusion Asian Food



## THE FINE ART OF MAKING BUTTER PRAWNS

**Preparing the prawns before frying.** Wash the prawns thoroughly. Cut off the head partially as well as the sharp end near to the tail

The reason we suggest to cut off the head partially is because some people might not like to eat the head. However, we retain the head partially for the aesthetic reasons. If you like to eat prawn heads, you may just leave the head uncut.



Make sure you drain the prawns thoroughly after washing. It is better if you pat dry the prawns before frying. This way, the prawns will turn out to be crispy.

A

**Deep frying the prawns.** You need to pay attention when you deep fry the prawns. The prawns must not be wet. The oil for deep frying must be very hot (should be about 190 degrees celsius). If you do this correctly, the prawns will turn out to be crispy after frying.



You need to fry the prawns for about two minutes, of course it depends on the amount of the oil in the deep fryer and the number of prawns you have. It should maintain the temperature of the oil at high heat throughout the frying process. It is done when the color of the prawns turn to pinkish and appears to be semi translucent. Keep the prawns aside if you have not prepared the oat mixture yet. You can stir fry the prawns with the oat mixture if it has already been sautéed in the wok.

A

**The oat mixture.** Just mix all the ingredients as in A together. You can use the instant oat as the cooking process is quite short.



C

**The egg yolk.** The egg yolk is one thing that is a little more technical. Those who like to eat butter prawns may not know how it is prepared, and some don't even know those yellow crispy stirps covered the prawns are egg yolk!



B





# TASTE OF ASIAN FOOD

## How To Cook Authentic & Fusion Asian Food



### THE FINE ART OF MAKING BUTTER PRAWNS

#### To prepare the egg strips.

The first step is to separate the egg yolk from the egg white. The egg yolk is used in this recipe so that you need to figure out what you are going to do with the remaining egg white that is left behind. Beat the egg yolk until it is homogenous. Next, heat up enough butter or margarine for deep frying the egg yolk. We suggest about 250 g of margarine or butter for three yolks. The margarine or butter can only be used once, it is best not to use too much as it will be a waste.

Heat up the oil until it is VERY hot. Pour the egg yolk very slowly into the butter. It should be in a very small stream. At the same time, stir the oil constantly with a whisk. Continue to pour the yolk and stir non-stop. The egg yolk will form into streaks as the butter is stirred in circular motion. Make sure the butter is hot enough or if not, the egg yolk will not be crisp and golden brown.



**B**

The butter will eventually swell and turns frothy. It will look like the foam on top of a cup of cappuccino or the egg white after beating while making sponge cake. At this point of time, you should use to check the egg yolk has turned to golden brown.

The egg will be cooked continuously in the butter even after you remove it from the wok due to the latent heat of the butter. Therefore, it is important to remove it once it turns to light golden brown as the color will be darker eventually. You can pour the butter and egg yolk streaks into a sieve to separate and drain away the butter.

#### Stir-fried the prawns.

Heat up 30ml of butter in the wok and lightly sauté the curry leaves. Add the oat mixture into the wok and mix well. Add the prawns that have been deep-fried and stir fry for a few seconds. Use only low heat at this point as the butter will turn into darker color if the heat is too high, which will affect the color of the prawns. Lastly, add the egg yolk streaks and mix well.



# TASTE OF MALAYSIAN FOOD

How To Cook Authentic & Fusion Malaysian Food

## Malaysian Curry Chicken



### A BRIEF INTRODUCTION

Malaysia is located at the crossroads of the ancient trade route from India to the Malay Peninsula. Curry was then introduced to Malaysia by the Indian immigrants. The Malaysian version of curry is therefore closest to the taste of Indian curry. Nowadays, curry has become one of the favorable foods in Malaysia enjoyed by all ethnic groups.



Chicken curry is one of the most common forms of curry available in Malaysia. There are many versions of Malaysian chicken curry. Different cooks will add and alter the recipe based on their preference. However, most of these versions of chicken curry have some similarities. They are prepared by cooking the chicken with potatoes. They also generally contain coconut milk, which has a rich and milky flavor. Malaysian chicken curry is usually served along with rice or roti canai (flat bread) or roti jala (net bread).

Malaysian chicken curry can be either wet or dry. The wet form is added with either coconut milk or yogurt whereas the dry form is left without. Malaysian chicken curry is different from Thai curry, which uses green chillies, basil and turmeric. Malaysian curry is also not as sweet as Japanese curries which is generally sweeter and less spicy.

Essentially, Malaysian chicken curry is cooked by preparing a blend of aromatic roots such as onion, ginger, lemongrass and fresh chilli. These ingredients are first blended together by using a mortar and a pestle. Then it is sautéed in a wok until fragrant. Curry powder that consists of spices such as turmeric, cumin, fennel, corianders are added into the wok to form a thick gravy. Chicken chunks are added along with some tamarind water and curry leaves. The chicken chunks are stewed with water and coconut milk until it is tender. Lime juice will be added at the end of the stewing process.

The following Malaysian chicken curry recipe is our time-tested recipe in our cafe. It is generally the same as mentioned above but with a few twist to make it a truly enjoyable Malaysian cuisine.



# TASTE OF ASIAN FOOD

## How To Cook Authentic & Fusion Asian Food



### INGREDIENTS

Oil  
Shallot / onion 150g  
Red chillies (NO SEED) 100g  
Ginger 25g  
Lemongrass (serai) 100g **(A)**

Chilli powder 30g  
Curry powder 60g  
Chicken bouillon powder 7g  
Salt 18g  
Sugar 13g **(B)**

Chicken 1kg  
Flour 4g  
Light soya sauce 4g  
Sugar 2g **(C)**

Potatoes 600g **(D)**

Curry leaves 10g  
Water 700g  
Coconut milk 200g  
Lime juice 7g **(E)**

### COOKING INSTRUCTIONS

- 1 Blend (A) with a electrical blender to form a f ne paste.
- 2 Mix (B) together.
- 3 Cut the chicken into chunks (with bones). Add f our, light soya sauce and sugar. Marinate for at least 2 hours.
- 4 Cut the potatoes into about 1.5 cm cube.
- 5 Place (A) in a wok. Saute (A) until smell fragrant with low heat.
- 6 Add (B) into the wok and mix with (A). Add some water to form a thick gravy.
- 7 Deep fry the chicken (C) for about 1 minutes or until slightly brown. Add into the wok.
- 8 Deep fry the potatoes (D) for about 2 minutes or until slightly brown. Add into the wok.
- 9 Add curry leaves, water and stew at low heat for 20 minutes.
- 10 Add the coconut milk and stew at low heat for another 5 minutes.
- 11 Turn of the heat and add the lime juice.



# TASTE OF ASIAN FOOD

## How To Cook Authentic & Fusion Asian Food



### THE FINE ART OF MAKING CURRY

**Lemongrass** - It is important to peel and discard the outer layer of the lemongrass which is hard. Cut the lemongrass into half and use only the part which is closer to the bulb. Cut away about 1 cm length from the bulb and discard, which is hard and difficult to blend. After discarding all the unused part, what is left should be the white part of the lemongrass, which has a fragrant smell and softer. Cut it lengthwise into smaller pieces so that it is easier to blend later.

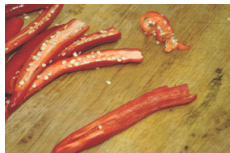
Put the lemongrass into the blender and blend for a while before adding other ingredients in (A). The resulting lemongrass after blending is finer in this way.



(A)

**Shallots/ onions** - You may use either shallots or onions to prepare the curry. The difference is unnoticeable from the practical point of view. Just give the shallots or onions a rough chop to shorten the time required for blending.

**Chilies** - Fresh red chilies are essential. Green chilies are not suitable as it will not give the authentic flavor of Malaysian curry. Dry red chili can be used, but the taste is not as fresh as using the fresh chilies. In addition, the color of the curry tends to be darker and less appetizing. It is not advisable to use less chilies to reduce the hotness as it will affect the final taste of the curry. Instead, remove the seeds as shown if you want to reduce the hotness of the curry.



(A)

**Ginger** - Cut the ginger in small pieces. Use young ginger as it is juicier than old ginger.

**Blend all the ingredients (A)** - Blend the lemongrass first before adding the chilies, shallots/ onions and ginger. Add the oil and blend together for at least 5 minutes. Make sure it is well blended or else there will be small pieces of lemongrass in the curry which is not advisable.



(A)

**Chilli powder, curry powder, chicken bouillon powder, salt and sugar** - These

seasoning ingredients are mixed together and add to the blended materials (A) in the wok. You can alter the amount of chilli powder based on the hotness you want to achieve.

However, we do not recommend to reduce the amount of curry powder as it will lessen the curry taste.

Chicken bouillon powder is optional. If you do not wish to use it, you need to increase the amount of salt to achieve the desired saltiness. The sugar is added to balance the sourness of the lime juice that is added at the later part of the cooking process.



Most of the reputable restaurants prepare the curry powder from scratch. As this is a tedious work and involves a myriad of spices in small quantity, I suggest you can use the ready made curry powder. One of my favorite brands is Baba Meat Curry Powder made in Malaysia.

(B)

# TASTE OF ASIAN FOOD

## How To Cook Authentic & Fusion Asian Food



### THE FINE ART OF MAKING CURRY

**Chicken** - Chicken should be first washed, cut into chunks and drained. The **four, light soya sauce** and **sugar** are added to marinate for at least 2 hours. This process will let the soya sauce penetrate into the inner part of the chicken meat, and hence enhance the flavor.

The chicken chunks are deep fried for about 2 to 3 minutes. The goal is to enhance the flavor through the browning process. It is therefore not important if the chicken chunks are not cooked. After deep frying, the chicken chunks are added to the curry mixture in the wok.

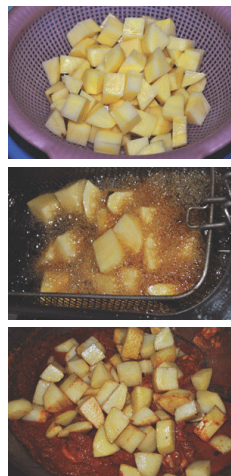
C



**Potatoes** - Cut the potatoes into cubes of about 1.5 cm in size. Drained away any water and deep fry until slightly brown.

The purpose of deep frying the potatoes is the same as the chicken chunks. Deep frying will add extra flavor to the potatoes.

D



**Curry leaves** - Add the curry leaves into the wok and cook with the chicken chunks and potatoes.

Add **water** whenever is necessary. Stir constantly to prevent sticking to the bottom of the wok. Use low heat to stew for about 20 minutes or until the potatoes are soft.

Add the **coconut milk** after 20 minutes of stewing. The coconut milk is not required to cook for a long time. Just heat through and you can then remove the chicken curry from the wok.

Check the consistency of the curry. You may want to add some water if it is too thick, or boil for a little longer if you prefer it to be thicker.

Lastly, squeeze some **lime juice** into the wok and mix well.

Done!

E





# TASTE OF ASIAN FOOD

## How To Cook Authentic & Fusion Asian Food



### A BRIEF INTRODUCTION

Rendang is a type of meat dish originated from Indonesia. According to Prof Gutti from Andalas University, rendang began to spread to Peninsular Malaysia when Minangkabau merchants and migrant workers began to trade and migrate to Malacca as early as the 16th century.



Rendang is a spicy meat dish prepared by using beef, chicken or lamb. The main ingredients used in this dish are lemongrass, coconut milk, roasted grated coconut flesh (kerisik), chilli paste and turmeric leaves. There are different types of rendang across the Asia region. Some rendang recipes called for cinnamon, cloves, coriander in addition to the above spices. However, they share a common similarity, i.e. rich in coconut milk and plenty of spices. The result is a tender and moist meat dish that infused with complex flavors.

Rendang has been in the limelight in the culinary world in 2011. An online survey by CNN that involves 35,000 people during that year has voted rendang as the number one dish of their 'World's 50 Most Delicious Foods' list.

There are two types of rendang - the wet and the dry type. The Malaysian rendang is usually skewed towards the wet side. Coconut milk and grated coconut are used in the Malaysian rendang recipes. Coconut milk are not only enriched the flavor of the meat, but add the milky (lemak in Malay) texture due to the high content of coconut oil.

In Malaysia, rendang is served either with white rice, nasi lemak or nasi briyani. It is also eaten along with rice cake (ketupat) or glutinous rice called 'lemang'.

# TASTE OF ASIAN FOOD

How To Cook Authentic & Fusion Asian Food



## INGREDIENTS

Chilli paste	215g	
Ginger	57g	
Gelangal (lengkuas)	57g	
Oil	1g	(A)

Coconut milk	500g	(B)
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Chicken (drumstick)	1 kg	
Salt	12g	
White pepper	1g	(C)

Lemongrass	3 stalks	
Turmeric leaf	1 piece	
Sugar	14g	(D)

Kerisik	200g	(E)
Assam keping	1g	

## COOKING INSTRUCTIONS

- 1 Blend (A) with a electrical blender to form a f ne paste.
- 2 Out the chicken to large pieces. Marinate with salt and pepper for half an hour.
- 3 Place all the ingredients (A) after blending in a wok or pan. Saute with low heat for a few minutes until fragrant.
- 4 Add the lemongrass, turmeric leaf, sugar and coconut milk. Simmer for about 20 minutes with low heat until the chicken is tender.
- 5 Add the roasted shredded coconut (kerisik) and assam water. Simmer for another 20 minutes.



# TASTE OF ASIAN FOOD

## How To Cook Authentic & Fusion Asian Food



## THE FINE ART OF MAKING RENDANG

**Chilies paste** - Fresh red chills is preferred. Green chillies are not suitable as they do not have the authentic flavor of Malaysian curry. Dry red chilli can be used, but the taste is not as good as using the fresh chillies. In addition, the color of the curry tends to be darker and less appetizing if dry chillies are used. Remove the seeds as shown if you want to reduce the hotness of the curry, not the number of chillies.

To prepare chilli paste, use chopped red chillies and blend it to become paste with a blender. Alternatively, you can buy the blended chilli paste from the Asian grocery shops or supermarkets if it is available. **A**



**Ginger** - Cut the ginger in small pieces. Use young ginger as it is juicier than old ginger.

**Gallangal** - Gallangal is also called blue ginger. It is called lengkuas in Malay. It has a stronger taste than ginger and gives a distinctive flavor to the Asian dishes. The outer layer of galangal is thick and hard. The quantity as stated in the recipe is the net weight required after peeling of the outer layer. Since it is harder than the common ginger, chopped the galangal into smaller pieces will help to shorten the time required to blend.



**Lemongrass** - Cut away about 1 cm from the bulb and discard the part which is dirty and hard to wash. Use the back of the chef knife to hit hard on the lemongrass a few times to flatten it. The purpose of this step is to ensure the flavor of the lemongrass released fully during the cooking process.

**Turmeric leaf** - Called daun kunyit in Malay, turmeric leaf adds flavor to rendang. Usually the leaves are tied together in a knot before putting into the wok so it can be removed easily. Some rendang recipes suggest to cut the leaves into small pieces and serve together with the meat without removing it. Both methods are the acceptable ways in Malaysian cooking. The alternative to turmeric leaves is kaffir lime leaves, but turmeric leaves are preferred. You need to use 5-6 kaffir lime leaves to substitute one turmeric leaf. **D**

**Coconut milk** - Coconut milk is the liquid that comes from the grated meat of the coconut. The color is similar to milk and has a high oil content.



The best rendang can only be prepared by using the freshly pressed coconut milk. If you need to buy the coconut milk in advance, be sure to keep it in the freezer (-16 degree Celsius). It will be as good as the fresh one within a few weeks. Do not leave it at room temperature for too long as it is not stable. The quality and flavor will deteriorate quickly.

If you are unable to get the freshly pressed coconut milk, you can use the packet coconut milk that is available at most of the Asian grocery shops or supermarkets. **B**



# TASTE OF ASIAN FOOD

## How To Cook Authentic & Fusion Asian Food



## THE FINE ART OF MAKING RENDANG

**Chicken** - Chicken should be washed, cut into chunks and drained. The chicken pieces are added into the wok and cooked with small flame for about 20 minutes before adding the kerisik.

**MAKE BEEF RENDANG** - Rendang is a versatile dish. Beef, lamb and chicken are the favorite meat for rendang in Malaysia. If wish to cook beef rendang, substitute the chicken with beef. The following changes are essential:

1. It is best to use sirloin beef. If you use the beef shoulder, be sure that you cook it for a longer period until it is tender. Generally, the beef should be stewed at low heat for about 2 to 3 hours.
2. It is best to cut the beef into slices of about quarter to half cm thick.
3. You may want to shear the beef first before adding into the mixture of spices. The goal is to add flavor. However, it is an optional step.

C

**The cooking process** - Sauté the paste in (A) with a little bit of oil for about 2 to 3 minutes or until it smells fragrant. Add the chicken, lemongrass, turmeric leaves and coconut milk.



**The cooking process** - Cook the chicken (or beef) at low heat until it is tender. (Chicken 20 minute and beef about 2-3 hours. After that add the asam water.



**Asam keping** - Asam keping (scientific name is *Garcinia atroviridis*) is a large rainforest tree native to peninsular Malaysia. It is usually sold in the dried pieces. Soak the asam keping in hot water for a few minutes, discard the asam pieces and use only the water. If there is any difficulty to get asam keping, you can use tamarind (called asam jawa in Malay) as a substitute. You will still get the authentic flavor as some Malaysian recipe called for the use of tamarind instead of asam keping.



E

**Kerisik** - Kerisik is the grated coconut used in Malaysian and Indonesian cooking. Coconut flesh is grated to become fine grains. After that, it is toasted until brownish, then ground into powder. It can be found in some Asian specialty food shops. Kerisik is added in the final step of cooking. It needs to be cooked for another 10 to 15 minutes until it is fully assimilated into the rendang sauce. The final sauce is rich in coconut milk and have minimum water content.



E

# TASTE OF ASIAN FOOD

## How To Cook Authentic & Fusion Asian Food



### A BRIEF INTRODUCTION

Nasi lemak is the favorite Malaysian food for the locals. It is rice cooked with coconut milk and other ingredients such as fenugreek, onion, ginger and a knot of pandan (screwpine). It is similar to the nasi uduk originated from Indonesia. The word nasi means rice, and lemak means creamy in Malay. The rice is steamed together with these ingredients so that the gorgeous, aromatic flavor of the coconut milk and screwpine leaves is infused into the rice. It is so good that it can be eaten by its own.



It is believed that nasi lemak was invented by the Malay community. It was not until the 1930s that nasi lemak was first mentioned in the local newspaper in Malaysia. At that time, nasi lemak was already selling at Kampong Baru in Kuala Lumpur. Since then, nasi lemak has become the most popular rice dish and evolved from the original version to the luxurious version served with rendang and curry.

Nasi lemak is served with the basic accompaniment such as sambal, hard-boiled eggs, roasted peanuts, deep fried anchovies and cucumbers. The more luxurious version includes rendang beef (stew beef in coconut milk), chicken curry, sotong (cuttlefish) and achar (pickle vegetables). It is either served in a platter in the Malay restaurants or wrapped with banana leaves to form a pyramid shape wrapper at the roadside store. Therefore, the local fondly called it as nasi lemak bungkus which means 'packed nasi lemak'. The combination of nasi lemak, the accompaniment and the curry is really a feast for all the senses. It is no wonder the local always ask for 'tambah nasi' at the nasi lemak store, which means 'to add more rice'!



# TASTE OF ASIAN FOOD

How To Cook Authentic & Fusion Asian Food



## INGREDIENTS

Rice	500g	<b>A</b>
Pandan leaves	3	<b>B</b>
Coconut milk	150 g	
Water	add up to 875 g*	
Ginger	3 thin slices, chopped	
Onion	1 medium	
Salt	0.25 tsp	
Chicken bouillon	1 tsp	
Fenugreek (halba)	1tsp	<b>C</b>

\*Total amount of water +  
coconut milk = 850g

Served with;

1. Hard boiled egg
2. Roasted peanuts
3. Cucumbers
4. Sambal

**D**

## COOKING INSTRUCTIONS

- 1 Wash the rice with plenty of water. After washing, remove the excess water as much as possible.
- 2 Add coconut milk and water to the rice. Total amount of both should be 875g.
- 3 Take three pandan leaves and tie them into a knot.
- 4 Add the pandan leaves, ginger, onion salt chicken bouillon, fenugreek into the rice. Give it a quick stir.
- 5 Cook the rice with slow flame until it is done.

# TASTE OF ASIAN FOOD

## How To Cook Authentic & Fusion Asian Food



## THE FINEART OF MAKING NASI LEMAK

**Onions** - Dice the onion and mix with the rice before cooking.



**Fenugreek** - This is an optional ingredient. However, the inclusion of this spice make the difference between a good and mediocre nasi lemak. Fenugreek adds color and fragrant. So do not ignore this little detail.

**Ginger** - A few slices of young ginger goes a long way. Mince the ginger so that the flavor is fully incorporated into all the rice grains.

**Pandan leaves** - Pandan is also called srewpine leaves. The leaves are tied in a knot for easy removal from the rice after the rice is cooked.



The leave should be washed and submerged fully in the liquid while the rice is boiling. You can smell the aroma while boiling. The aroma is most intense when the lid is opened right after cooking.



### Accompaniments served with nasi lemak

The usual accompaniments served with nasi lemak are hard boiled eggs, roasted ground nuts, cucumbers and sambal. For the more luxurious version, rendang chicken and a variety of curries are served together. The followings are the method of preparations of hard boiled eggs, roasted ground nuts, cucumbers and sambal.

### Sambal -

Dry red chilli (remove seed)	20 g
Fresh red chilli	120 g
Onion	120 g
Garlic	40 g
Vegetable oil	60 g

Assam jawa	35 g
Sugar	10 g
Chicken bouillon	20 g
Belacan	5 g

Onion rings	150 g
-------------	-------

1. Blend the dry chilli, fresh chilli, onions and garlic with the vegetable oil with a blender.
2. Pour the blended ingredients into a wok or a pan. Saute for a few minutes with low heat until it becomes fragrant.
3. Add the assam jawa (water only), sugar, chicken bouillon and belacan. Mix well and cook with low heat for another 10 minutes. (You may add a little bit of water if you wish).
4. Finally, add the onion rings into the above and cook for another 1 minute.

**Roasted ground nuts** - Lightly roast the ground nuts in a pan or wok until it turns color slightly.

**Ikan bilis (anchovies)** - Deep-fried with oil until crispy

**Cucumbers** - Slice the cucumber into slices. Its cooling properties provides a balance to the hot sambal and roasted ground nuts.



**Hard boiled egg** - Usually hard boiled egg is indispensable for nasi lemak.





# TASTE OF ASIAN FOOD

## How To Cook Authentic & Fusion Asian Food



### THE FINE ART OF MAKING NASI LEMAK

**Rice** - Most Asians are familiar with how to boil rice as rice is the staple food. For non Asian, this section will explain the gist of the proper way to boil rice.

Essentially, these are the basic steps:

1. Rinse the rice - Rinse the rice until the rice water runs clear. This is to clean the rice grains and to wash away the unwanted starch of the rice. The rice grains should not stick together and are best separated from each other after cooking. Long grain rice such as jasmine rice or basmati rice are best for this dish.

Glutinous rice, Japanese rice and Arborio rice are not suitable as they are sticky.

2. Add water to the rice - First, remove as much water as possible from the rice after rinsing. Then, add liquid (150g of coconut milk topped up with water to 875g) to the rice).



3. Boil the rice with medium heat. Once it is boiled, turn to small flame and open the lid of the pot slightly to let the steam to escape. You can buy an electrical rice cooker if you intend to boil rice frequently as it will take care of all these steps.

4. The rice is cooked if the surface of the rice is set and there are 'craters' being observed.

5. Fluff the rice while it is still warm and let the extra steam to escape.

6. Cover with the lid tightly and leave it for 10 minutes. Served..

**Coconut milk** - Coconut milk is the liquid that comes from the grated meat of the coconut. The color is similar to milk and has a high oil content. The best nasi lemak can only be prepared by using the



freshly pressed coconut milk. If you need to buy the coconut milk in advance, be sure to keep it in the freezer (-16 degree Celsius). It will be as good as the fresh one within a few weeks. Do not leave it at room temperature for too long as it is not stable.

If you are unable to get the freshly pressed coconut milk, you can use the packet coconut milk that is available at most of the Asian grocery shops or supermarkets.



# TASTE OF ASIAN FOOD

## How To Cook Authentic & Fusion Asian Food



### A BRIEF INTRODUCTION

Curry puffs are an all-time favorite snacks among the Malaysian. It is sold in local restaurants, roadside hawker stores and now en-route into some fusion cafes. It is called Karipap in Malay, in Chinese. It is a snack made with pastry with variety of curry fillings inside. The most common fillings in Malaysian curry puffs is a mixture of chicken meat potatoes and onion. Sometimes hard-boiled eggs are also included.



Curry puffs are purportedly introduced to Malaysia in the 15th century by the Portuguese. During that time, the Portuguese conquered Malacca and Malaysia became a settlement of the Portuguese empire. The Portuguese introduced their version of empanada, a type of pastry with usually beef fillings. It is said that the locals incorporate the staple food such as potato and curry into the formula and eventually evolve into their own version of snack, which is called curry puffs.

Curry puffs may also have derived from samosa, a deep-fried Indian snack in triangle shape. Whichever is true, curry puffs have become the most popular snack that is liked by the Malay, Chinese and Indians.

The best curry puffs are those made with flaky pastry. This is the pastry developed by the Chinese, who is also used to make other snacks such as egg tarts, and 'Su Pao'. This type of pastry is much like the puff pastry, but the dough is not separated by butter. Instead, the layers are created by using a mixture of oil and flour. It may take a little extra time to make, but you will never regret once you have tasted it.

# TASTE OF ASIAN FOOD

## How To Cook Authentic & Fusion Asian Food



### INGREDIENTS

#### Fillings:

Oil	5Tbsp
Onion	450g
Curry powder	9Tbsp
Chilli powder	3Tbsp
Soya sauce	3Tbsp
Chicken (minced meat)	500g
Potato	600g
Sugar	5g
Pepper	1tsp
Chicken bouillon powder	25g
Salt	5g
Water	500g
Green pea	120g

#### Water Dough :

Flour	640g
Butter	140g
Sugar	57g
Water	355g
Salt	5g

#### Oil Dough

Flour	500g
Shortening	280g

### COOKING INSTRUCTIONS

- 1 Cut the onion into small pieces. Saute the onion with oil. Add the chicken meat and stir fry until it is cooked.
- 2 Add curry powder, chili powder, soya sauce, sugar, pepper, chicken bouillon powder, salt and water.
- 3 Cut the potato into half cm cube and add to the above. Cook with slow heat until the potatoes are soft. Add water to cook further if necessary. Reduce the curry to a thick sauce. Add the green pea and done.
- 4 To make the water dough : mix the flour, butter, sugar and salt together until it looks like bread crumbs. Add the ice cold water and mix further until it forms a dough that is no longer sticky.
- 5 To make the oil dough : just mix the flour and shortening together until it is homogenous.
- 6 Divide the water dough and oil dough into 4 portions. Roll out a portion of the water dough, place a portion of the oil dough at the centre and wrap it up. Flatten and fold it for 3 times, much like making a western style puff pastry. (refer to the 'fine art' page for details.)
- 7 Cut a portion of the dough and wrap the filling inside. (Refer to the 'fine art' page for details.)
- 8 Deep fried for 5 minutes or until golden brown.



# TASTE OF ASIAN FOOD

How To Cook Authentic & Fusion Asian Food



## THE FINE ART OF MAKING CURRY PUFFS

**Chicken, potatoes, onion** -  
Dice the onion, chicken  
breast meat and potatoes



**Curry powder, chilli  
powder, soya sauce, sugar,  
white pepper, chicken  
bouillon powder, salt** -  
Measure according to the  
recipe



**Cook the curry** - Sauté the  
onion with some oil, add  
the curry powder mixture,  
saute until fragrant



**Cook the curry** - Add  
chicken, potatoes and  
water, cook for 10 minutes  
or more until the potatoes  
are soft.

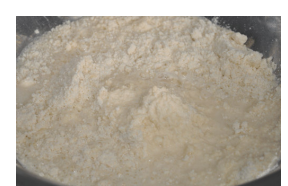


**Cook the curry** - Turn off the heat, add the green  
peas and mix well.



A

**Water dough** - Measure the  
flour, butter, sugar, and salt,  
mix well by using your hand  
in a bowl. Mix until it  
resembles bread crumbs.  
Add water and knead until it  
does not stick to the bowl.



**Oil dough** - Just mix the  
water and shortening  
together until even. (You can  
also use butter if you prefer,  
but butter is softer and it can  
be more difficult to handle  
during the folding process.



B



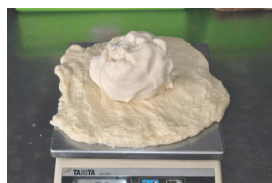
# TASTE OF ASIAN FOOD

## How To Cook Authentic & Fusion Asian Food



## THE FINE ART OF MAKING CURRY PUFFS

**Create the layers** - Place the oil dough at the centre of the water dough. Wrap the oil dough with the water dough. (So it is much like an egg, oil dough is the yolk and water dough is the white.



**Create the layers** - Flatten the dough to become a rectangle by using a rolling pin. Roll it up much like rolling a Swiss roll. It is much easier if you put the dough between two plastic sheets during the rolling process, as it will solve the problem of stickiness.



Flatten the 'Swiss roll' to become a rectangle again. Repeat the process three times. This process is similar to making puff pastry and croissant. The difference is the layers are separated by the oil dough, not the butter alone.



**Create the layers** - After the third time you roll up the 'Swiss roll', use a sharp knife to cut out a small piece. Flatten the piece of dough and you are ready to use it to make the puffs.



**Make the puffs** - Place the filling at the centre of the pastry. Fold it and seal the side by pressing it lightly with your fingers.



Use your fingers to crimp the edge of the puff. It may take a little practice to get it right.



# TASTE OF ASIAN FOOD

## How To Cook Authentic & Fusion Asian Food



### A BRIEF INTRODUCTION

There is a misconception among many non Asian that all curries are f ery hot, and needs to stand by glasses of cold water to subdue the burning sensation on your tongue. However, this is not the case for Kapitan Chicken.

The name Kapitan Chicken is derived from a fun legend back in the British colony time. Accord- ing to the Malaysian history, legend has it one of the Chinese cook of a ship owned by the British was eager to learn how to cook the local cuisine. One day, he saw a Malay woman pre- paring a stewed chicken dish and the kitchen was permeated with unfamiliar exotic f avor. He asked the woman if she is willing to share her recipe, whom she obliged. The woman told him that it is a chicken curry dish and graciously show him the method of cooking .



Upon returning to his own kitchen, he realized that it could be too spicy for the British captain and the crew members. He improvised the recipe by drastically reduced the amount of chili and added some Chinese ingredients to enhance the f avor. When the captain asked him to prepare a banquet for his guests, he decided to take the risks to serve this new creation to the captain and his guests. To his surprise, the captain liked it very much and the dish received raved review from all his guests. The captain ask him what is the name of this dish. He was caught of guarded and was just by murmuring " ayam kapitan ", which means captain's chicken in Malay. The name has since stuck with this dish among the locals until today.

The key characteristic of chicken kapitan is the use of the traditional Malay herbs and spices with a touch of Chinese cooking method. It has a distinct Nyonya f avor as a result of the combination of lemongrass, galangal (a type of ginger, also all blue ginger ), turmeric ( the local terms it as yellow ginger ), coconut milk and belacan (local shrimp paste). It is dif erent from the Malay and Indian curry as it is not only cooked with less chili, but is also using a dif erent mix of spices. The common spices used in the Malay and Indian curries such as cumin, fenugreek and fennel are hardly used. Instead, belacan and turmeric are added in a small amount with abundance of coconut milk.



# TASTE OF ASIAN FOOD

## How To Cook Authentic & Fusion Asian Food



### INGREDIENTS

Chicken 2000g  
Turmeric powder 1Tbsp  
Salt 25g  
Oil to rub 20g

(A)

Onion 300g  
Garlic 4 cloves  
Ginger 20g  
Galangal 40g  
Turmeric 20g  
Candlenut 8pieces  
Lemongrass 130g  
Dry chillies 8pieces  
Red chillies 80g  
Belacan 8g  
Oil to blend 50g

(B)

Coconut milk 500g  
Kaffir lime leaves 6 finely sliced  
Brown sugar 20g  
Fried shallots to garnish

(C)

### COOKING INSTRUCTIONS

- 1 Wash and cut the chicken into large pieces (with bone)
- 2 Marinate the chicken with turmeric powder, salt and some oil. Leave it for at least 30 minutes.
- 3 Cut all the ingredients in (B) into small pieces. Blend thoroughly by using a food processor.
- 4 Deep fry the chicken pieces until golden brown. (Alternatively, bake in oven at 200 degree Celsius for 30 minutes)
- 5 Place (B) in a wok, saute until fragrant.
- 6 Add the deep fried chicken into the wok.
- 7 Add the coconut milk, kaffir lime leaves and brown sugar into the wok and simmer at low heat for 20 minutes or until the sauce is thickened.
- 8 Dish out and garnish with fried shallots.



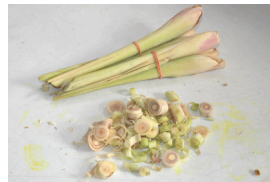
# TASTE OF ASIAN FOOD

## How To Cook Authentic & Fusion Asian Food



## THE FINE ART OF MAKING KAPITAN CHICKEN

**Variation** - You can also choose not to blend the lemongrass at all. In this case, the lemongrass is bashed and cook together with the chicken in order to extract its flavor. The bashed lemongrass should be removed before serving.



You can varied the amount of chillies based on the desired spiciness you want. We recommend to use half portion of dry and half portion of fresh chillies. Red fresh chillies will give the dish the flavor of freshness while dry chillies will add more fiery hotness to the dish.



**Candlenuts** - You can blend the candlenuts with other spices or just crush them and cook with the chicken at the later stage. Candlenuts do not give much flavor. The main purpose is to thicken the gravy (works pretty similar to potatoes). You may use cashew nuts as a substitute in the event candlenuts are not available.



**Belacan** - Belacan is a shrimp paste commonly used in Malay cuisine. Belacan is salty and therefore it is important to measure the amount required accurately. Belacan provides the unique flavor to kapitan chicken but is never the main ingredient. A small amount is required so that not to overpower the flavor of other spices.



**How to blend the ingredients** - Cut the galangal into small pieces before blending as it is quite hard. Soak the dry chillies in hot water for about 15 minutes or until it is soft and cut it into pieces. Remove the outer layer of the lemongrass and use the bulb only, which is white in color. Cut the white portion of the lemongrass into thin slices. Blend these items together until really fine and homogenous. It is important to note that if the galangal and lemongrass are not blended until really fine, you may experience some undesirable pieces of galangal and lemongrass remained in the gravy after cooking. Finally, add the onions paste





# TASTE OF ASIAN FOOD

## How To Cook Authentic & Fusion Asian Food



## THE FINE ART OF MAKING KAPITAN CHICKEN

**Chicken**- Traditionally, the chicken should be cut into large pieces with the bone attached. The chicken pieces are marinated with turmeric powder, salt and some oil. It is best to marinate for at least 30 minutes, or even better if overnight. This is to ensure the flavor is penetrated fully into the inner part of the chicken pieces.



It is advisable to use a disposable hand glove when you marinate the chicken, as the turmeric will leave yellow stain on your hand.

Traditionally, chicken pieces are deep fried until golden brown. The downside of deep frying is that the oil will turn yellowish and permeate with the flavor of turmeric, which will become unusable to deep fry other food items subsequently. Alternatively, you can bake it for half an hour at 200 Celsius degrees. If you bake it, the chicken will be less oily and more tender.



### Cooking in the wok -

Sautéed the blended mixture in the wok for about 10 minutes or until it turns fragrant. The red color chili oil should separate from the paste at this moment. Add the chicken that has been deep fried (or baked) into the mixture and mix well. Add the coconut milk and the kaffir lime leaves and brown sugar. Cook for about 20 minutes.



**Lime leaves** - You can just use the whole piece of kaffir lime leaves or cut them into fine strips. Kaffir lime leaves are quite hard and therefore it is essential to be finely cut. As for the sugar, you can use white sugar instead of brown sugar. It is even better if you use palm sugar, provided it is available at the country you reside. Palm sugar will give kapitan chicken a more authentic flavor.



**Coconut milk** - Add the coconut milk and stew for 20 minutes. You may want to add some water if it is too dry.



A

C

# TASTE OF ASIAN FOOD

## How To Cook Authentic & Fusion Asian Food



### A BRIEF INTRODUCTION

The evergreen number one Chinese Malaysian food, Hainanese chicken rice is cooked and loved by the Chinese all over the world. Despite its name, Hainanese Chicken Rice actually has its roots in either Malaysia or Singapore. Until today, both countries are still fervently debating the origin of this dish, but one thing is sure, you will not get the same dish back in Hainan of China. It is most probably that the local Hainanese people in Malaysia and Singapore invent this dish by modifying the original Hainanese recipe, called Wenchang chicken ().



There are many versions of chicken used for this dish, from poached white chicken to roasted chicken. Among all, poach chicken remain to be the most in-demand version.

For roasted chicken, the chicken is carefully marinated with Chinese spices and subsequently roasted in the oven until it is crispy and brown. Another popular version is to poach the entire chicken right below the boiling point of water until it is cooked. The rice is boiled by using the stock in a pot together with garlic and a number of spices. It is a bit like the 'pilaf' on the western menu. Finally, cucumber slices are served along with the chicken.

Poach chicken is prepared by poaching at sub-boiling temperatures in a bone stock. The stock is reused over and over again for pouching another chicken and used as the master stock to cook other dishes in the restaurant. As we do not have this 'master stock' at home, we will use only water in this recipe which is still very much f avorful if you season the water well before poaching.

The chicken is served with a specially made soy based sauce and ginger paste. A special chili paste is also a popular accompaniment.



# TASTE OF ASIAN FOOD

How To Cook Authentic & Fusion Asian Food



## INGREDIENTS

Chicken:  
One whole chicken  
about 2 a 2.5 kg  
Salt 25g  
Ginger (smashed) 20g  
Garlic 4 cloves  
Pandan leaf 2 pieces **(A)**

Water for pouching:  
Salt 10g  
Chicken powder 5g  
Ginger 1 piece  
Garlic 3 cloves  
Water 5 liters **(B)**

Ginger sauce:  
Young ginger 80g  
Salt 0.5 teaspoon  
Chicken powder 0.5  
teaspoon  
Oil 1 tablespoon **(F)**

Light Soya Sauce Mix :  
Sugar 5g  
Chicken powder 2.5g  
Premier soya sauce 30g  
Sesame oil 0.15 g  
Stock 40g **(C)**

Sweet Dark Soya Sauce:  
Water 30g  
Sugar 20g  
Dark soya sauce 50g **(D)**

Rice:  
Rice 800 g  
Stock to cook chicken  
1400 g  
Garlic (smashed) 5 cloves  
Chicken fat  
Ginger (smashed) 20 g **(E)**

## COOKING INSTRUCTIONS

- 1 Clean the chicken. Stuf the chicken with (A). Close with a toothpick.
- 2 Season a pot of water with (B). Bring to boil. Place the chicken in the water.
- 3 Pouch the chicken until the internal temperature reaches 160 degrees Fahrenheit. Remove the chicken and shock with ice water. Drained dry.
- 4 To prepare the light soya sauce mix, mix all the ingredients in (C) together and bring to boil.
- 5 To prepare the sweet dark soya sauce mix, mix all the ingredients in (D) together and bring to boil.
- 6 Wash the rice. Cook with the remaining ingredients in (E).
- 7 To prepare the ginger sauce, mix all in (F) and blend well.

# TASTE OF ASIAN FOOD

## How To Cook Authentic & Fusion Asian Food



## THE FINE ART OF MAKING CHICKEN RICE

### Prepare the chicken for pouching

Clean the chicken thoroughly. Rub the salt on the inner surface of the cavity of the chicken. Place the ginger (smashed), garlic and pandan leaves in the cavity of the chicken. Close the cavity using toothpicks.



The purpose of rubbing salt and putting the spices in the cavity is to enhance the flavor of the chicken. This is important as the pouching liquid can only effectively flavors the external surface of the chicken but not the inner cavity.



The screwpine leaves or pandan leaves in the native language, render a distinctive local flavor to the chicken. You may omit it if you have difficulty to get the screwpine leave in your country.

A

### How to pouch the chicken

Place all the ingredients of the pouching spices in cold water. Submerge the chicken fully in the water. Heat up the water until the temperature is about 160 degrees Fahrenheit (71 degrees Celcius).



B

There are a few important points you need to take note if you want the chicken to be soft and tender.



- Make sure the chicken is fully submerged in the water. This is important to ensure the chicken is evenly cooked.



- Bring the water to about 80 degrees Fahrenheit before you start pouching the chicken.

- The amount of water used should be just enough to cover the chicken entirely. As we will use the pouched water as stock after pouching, we would like to keep the pouched water as concentrate as possible.

- It is crucial to pouch the chicken at sub-boiling temperature. It is best if you have a kitchen thermometer to ensure the water temperature is below the boiling point at all times.

- Pouch the chicken until it is fully cooked. Pierce the thermometer to the thickest part of the chicken such as the chicken thigh. Once the temperature reaches 160 degrees Fahrenheit (71 degrees Celcius), the chicken is fully cooked.

B



# TASTE OF ASIAN FOOD

## How To Cook Authentic & Fusion Asian Food



## THE FINE ART OF MAKING CHICKEN RICE

### Shock the chicken with ice water

After the chicken is cooked, remove the chicken and drained of the water. Submerge the chicken into a pale of ice water immediately.



This process is much like shocking the vegetables by the western chefs. The latent heat will continue cooking the chicken and if it is left unattended to, the chicken will be over cooked. The ice water brings the temperature of the chicken down quickly to retain its juiciness and tenderness.



### Cook the rice

Rinse the rice with water a few times until the water runs clear. Drained well. Sauté the ginger and garlic with oil in the wok. Add the rice and stir fried for about half a minute. You may skip this step and boil the rice with the stock straight away, but sautéing the rice with garlic and ginger add extra fragrance to the rice.



Boil the rice by using the stock instead of water. You may refer to the Nasi Lemak recipe in this collection for more information about how to boil rice.

E

### Prepare the sauce

There are two sauces we offer here. The one that is prepared with thick soya sauce is a Malay style version. The one with light soya sauce is the original version of the Chinese. Since the soya sauce is the main ingredients for both sauces, it is important to use the best soya sauce you can find to prepare the sauces..



C

D

### Prepare the ginger paste (as dip sauce for the chicken)

Use the blender to blend all the ingredients together, Make sure use only young ginger for this purpose.

F

### How to serve

Cut the chicken into pieces, put it on a plate and pour the light soya sauce mixture on it. Garnish with shredded spring onions and coriander leaves.

Prepare the soup by season the stock with additional salt and pepper. Serve along with the chicken and the accompanied sauces.



# TASTE OF ASIAN FOOD

## How To Cook Authentic & Fusion Asian Food



### A BRIEF INTRODUCTION

Korma chicken recipe is based on korma spices and is a favorite dish among the Malay community. It is a rich and creamy recipe with plenty of coconut milk, which is the forbidden territory if you are a weight watcher. Korma is originated from the Turkish word kavurma, literally means 'cooked meat'. It also spelled as Khurma or Kurma, is considered as one of the less spicy versions of curry in Malaysia.



Korma is a dish originating from South Asia or Central Asia, consisting of meat and/or vegetables braised in a spiced sauce made with yogurt, cream, stock, nut or seed paste. It is now incorporated into the Malaysian food culture thanks to the introduction by the Indians who settled in Malaysia. It is undoubtedly one of the popular items found on the menu of any authentic Indian restaurant in Malaysia.

Apart from its milder flavor, korma can be distinguished from other curries by its rich gravy and smooth texture, mainly due to the heavy incorporation of yogurt or coconut milk as part of its main ingredients.

The flavor of a korma is the result of the combination of a mixture of spices, particularly ground coriander and cumin. The flavor of spices is further enhanced by braising the meat slowly. The meat should be braised in a pot set over a very low fire, with the lid on to provide all-round heat.

Korma can be mildly spiced or very hot. You may use lamb, chicken or beef. Some kormas combine meat with vegetables such as spinach and turnip. This Malaysia chicken korma recipe is the less spicy version and is suitable even for kids. You can of course add extra chillies to cook if you like.



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## INGREDIENTS

Chicken meat (with bone) 1kg

To blend & for marinate:

Ginger 30g

Onion 100g

Garlic 3 cloves

Green chili 5 pieces

Peppercorn 1 teaspoon

Cardamon 6 pieces

Candle nut 8 pieces

For marinate:

Malaysian curry powder 1 tablespoon

Plain yogurt 100g

Salt 10g

Coriander powder 1 teaspoon

Cinnamon stick 5 cm

To cook after marinate:

Ghee 30g

Tomato, quarter 2 pieces

Coconut milk 160g

## COOKING INSTRUCTIONS

- 1 Cut the chicken into large pieces
- 2 Blend the ginger, onion, garlic, green chili, peppercorn & cardamon with a tablespoon of water into a paste.
- 3 Marinate the chicken for a least half a day with the blended ingredients and Malaysian curry powder, plain yogurt, salt, coriander powder and cinnamon stick.
- 4 Heat up 30g of Ghee in a wok, add the marinated chicken and cook until slightly brown.
- 5 Add the coconut milk and tomato.
- 6 Crush the candlenuts into powder and add to the stew mixture.
- 7 Close the pot with a lid and let the meat simmer over medium heat until the meat is cooked through and sauce begins to thicken. You may need to check from time to time as the spices might start to burn on the base of the pot so what you need to do is to stir it gently.
- 8 Serve it hot with coriander leaves as garnishing.



# TASTE OF ASIAN FOOD

## How To Cook Authentic & Fusion Asian Food



## THE FINE ART OF MAKING KORMA CHICKEN

### Cut the chicken into large pieces -

Most Asian prefer to cut the chicken into pieces along with the bone attached. By this way, the bone of the chicken will provide additional flavor to the dish. This is most important, especially for stew dishes such as korma and other curry



### Blend -

Blend the ginger, onion, garlic, green chili, peppercorn, candlenuts & cardamom with a table-spoon of water into a paste -



### Marinate -

Marinate the chicken for at least half a day with the blended ingredients and Malaysian curry powder, plain yogurt, salt, coriander powder and cinnamon stick.

There are several alternatives to prepare korma chicken.

1) you can blend all the ingredients as mention here and marinate the chicken. The advantage of this method is that the flavor of the spices will penetrate into the chicken meat, and the yogurt will make it very tender. The downside it that the flavor is becoming more homogeneous, which means the flavor of the meat and the gravy will be quite close. It also does not allow you to deep fry or brown the chicken before stewing to improve the flavor.

2) You can also marinate the chicken with salt and a little of oil only. By doing so, you can deep fry the chicken or brown it with high heat for a minute to create the extra flavor, before returning to the wok. You can then saute the blended ingredients before adding the chicken. The downside of this method is that the flavor of the spices will not penetrate into the meat.

It is really up to you which method you choose, as both are authentic but will give you a slightly different flavor. Try both methods and you decide on which one your prefer.



### Ghee -

Heat up 30g of Ghee in a wok, add the marinated chicken and cook until slightly brown.

You can use ghee (purified butter) to saute the chicken along with the marinate. ( If you use the alternative method, i.e. only marinate the chicken with salt and oil, then you can use the ghee to saute the blended onion / garlic / spices mixture first before adding the chicken.) Ghee will give you the authentic flavor of korma, but any other vegetable oils can be used.





# TASTE OF ASIAN FOOD

## How To Cook Authentic & Fusion Asian Food



## THE FINE ART OF MAKING KORMA CHICKEN

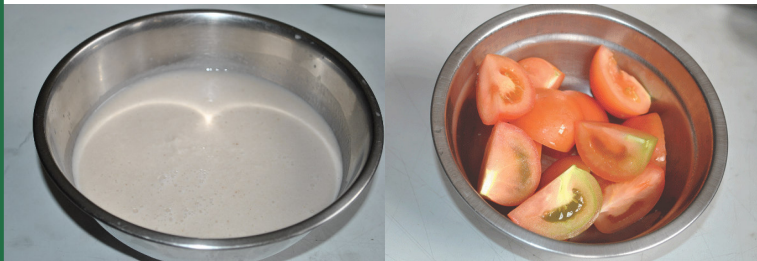
### Crush the candlenuts into powder and add to the stew mixture -

It is easier nowadays working in the kitchen with electric blender. It is not only faster, but resulting a homogenous paste which is much preferred for stewing. You can blend the candlenuts along with other ingredients or do it independently. If you decided to crush the candlenuts independently make sure it is blended until it becomes powdery. You may add the crushed candlenuts into the stew later. The purpose of adding candlenuts is to thicken the sauce, much like the use of potatoes in a western stew.



### Add coconut milk and tomato-

Add the coconut milk and tomato. reduce the heat once it brings to boil. You just need to quarter the tomato and it will eventually broken down into a paste.



### Simmer -

Close the pot with a lid and let the meat simmer over medium heat until the meat is cooked through and sauce begins to thicken.

You may need to check from time to time as the spices might start to burn on the base of the pot so what you need to do is to stir it gently. It is important to reduce the heat right after the stew reaches the boiling point. Korma is best cooked over low heat, preferably cover for a long time. If you are preparing a chicken korma, the cooking time can be only about 30 minutes. If you decided to change it to lamb korma, substitute the chicken with lamb and double up the amount of garlic. You need to cook for a longer period for lamb comparing to chicken as the lamb is tougher. However, it all depends on the thickness and the cut of the lamb.



### Serve -

Serve it hot with coriander leaves as garnishing. Korma is usually served along with biryani rice of white rice. It also goes along well with flatbread such as naan. Usually, it is presented with minimum garnishing. Coriander or mint leaves are among the most common one.



# TASTE OF ASIAN FOOD

## How To Cook Authentic & Fusion Asian Food



### A BRIEF INTRODUCTION

Seri Muka is like many other desserts from the Nyonya cuisine, which is a unique blend of Malay and Chinese culinary culture. Seri Muka (also known as Sri Muka and Kuih Seri Muka) is a traditional Malaysian / Peranakan dessert (kuih in Malay) that consists of two layers - one is savory and the other one is sweetened.



Traditional kuih (dessert) is very much popular in most of the Malays families. Seri Muka has become the favorite dessert for people from all religion and races in this multiracial country. It is most popular, especially among the Malays and is served during the festive season such as during the Ramadan month for 'buka puasa'. It is also a popular dessert for breakfast, afternoon tea as well as special occasions, for example, during wedding reception and festival season.

Seri muka literally means 'shining face' in Malay. The dessert consist of steamed glutinous rice forming the bottom layer, which is savory. The upper layer is custard made with pandan leaves (screw pine leaves), egg and coconut milk. Coconut milk which is called santan in Malay, impart the creamy and tropical flavor into both the rice and custard layers. If you are concerned about the green coloring of the upper layer, let me assure you that it is perfectly natural due to the use of pandan or screw pine leaves.

Most of the Seri Muka selling in shops or stores might have used green coloring to enhance the appearance of the kuih. However, the color of the top layer of this recipe is the result of the pandan extract which is green. I blend the leaves along with other ingredients to extract as much flavor (and color) from the pandan leaves. No short cut and artificial coloring is required.

As for the coconut milk, it is a little indulgence every now and then, right? It is best to use the freshly extracted coconut milk, which I can get it easily in any market in Malaysia. If you are in other countries where there is a difficulty to get fresh coconut milk, packet or canned coconut milk is the next-best thing you can use, I did try it once and it is perfectly acceptable.



# TASTE OF ASIAN FOOD

How To Cook Authentic & Fusion Asian Food



## INGREDIENTS

### Bottom Layer

Glutinous rice 300g  
Coconut milk 150g  
Salt 1tsp  
Sugar 1tsp

### Upper Layer :

Egg 200g  
Corn flour 55g  
Wheat flour 70g  
Sugar 200g  
Pandan leaves 6 pieces  
Salt 0.5tsp  
Coconut milk 600g

## COOKING INSTRUCTIONS

### Bottom Layer

- 1 Wash the glutinous rice, soak it in water for 4 hours, drained.
- 2 Add the coconut milk, salt and sugar and mixed well.  
Steam for 5 minutes
- 3 Fluff the rice and steam for another 20 minutes.
- 4 Use the back of the metal fork to press the rice so that it forms a solid layer.

### Upper Layer

- 1 In a separate bowl, blend the corn flour, wheat flour, sugar, pandan leaves salt and coconut milk.
- 2 Filter the mixture.
- 3 Add the eggs into the blended mixture and mix well.
- 4 Heat up the mixture with low heat and cook it until it starts to get thickened, about 75 degree Celsius.
- 5 Pour the hot mixture onto the pressed glutinous rice layer.
- 6 Scoop off any bubbles on the surface of the mixture.
- 7 Steam again for another 15 minutes with very low flame until the top layer is set.

### To serve

- 1 Remove from heat and let it cool for about 2 hours until the custard become firm.
- 2 Cut the Seri Muka into diamond shape and serve.

# TASTE OF ASIAN FOOD

How To Cook Authentic & Fusion Asian Food



## THE FINE ART OF MAKING SERI MUKA

### Bottom Layer

**Wash the glutinous rice, soak it in water for 4 hours, drained.**

Glutinous rice is sticky when cooked due to the low amylose content. It is essential to use glutinous rice only for this recipe. Glutinous rice requires much fewer amounts of water to cook as compared to long-grained rice. Therefore, it should be soaked beforehand and then steamed. It can be soaked longer than four hours or even overnight. Otherwise, you may need to add more water and steam for a longer period to ensure the rice is cooked.



**Add the coconut milk, salt and sugar and mixed well.**

It is best to use freshly pressed coconut milk from the market. It is thick and creamy. However, if you are not able to get the fresh coconut milk, you can substitute it with canned or packet coconut milk. It is crucial to use sufficient coconut milk since it is the major ingredient for this recipe. Do not add water to make up the volume.



**Fluff the rice** after steaming for five minutes and continue steam for another 30 minutes. Fluffing helps to loosen the rice so that it is easier to cook by steaming. After 30 minutes, open the lid of the steamer and check whether the rice is soft enough. You can steam for a longer time if it is not soft enough. The time required depends on how long the rice was soaked, how much water is in the steamer, and the heat use for steaming the rice. Medium heat is normally used to steam glutinous rice.

Use the back of the metal fork to press the rice so that it forms a solid layer.

When the glutinous rice is cooked, it will absorb the coconut milk and become quite firm. It is now ready for the next step, i.e. to add the upper layer on top of it.



### Upper Layer

In a separate bowl, blend the corn flour, wheat flour, sugar, pandan leaves, salt and coconut milk together. Filter the mixture. Add the eggs into the blended mixture and mix well.





# TASTE OF ASIAN FOOD

How To Cook Authentic & Fusion Asian Food



## THE FINE ART OF MAKING SERI MUKA

### Upper Layer

It is preferable to cut the pandan leaves into small pieces before blending. Blend for about 3 - 5 minutes. Then filter the mixture through a sieve to remove the leaves. The mixture has now become a homogenous liquid, which is slightly greenish due to the pandan extracts. Beat the egg and add into the green mixture.



Heat up the mixture with low heat and cook it until it starts to get thicken, about 75 degree Celsius. Pour the hot mixture onto the pressed glutinous rice layer.

You may want to pour the green mixture directly onto the rice layer that has been pressed. Alternatively, you can cook the mixture first by cooking it over a very small flame or by using a water bath. This is especially useful if you are making a large tray of Seri Muka, in which the innermost part of the custard may not be fully cooked even though the outer part is done. This problem can be solved if you partially pre-cooked the custard before pouring it onto the hot rice layer.



Scoop off any bubbles on the surface of the mixture. Steam again for another 15 minutes with very low flame until the top layer is set.

Steam the Seri Muka with the steamer lid on over very low heat. If you use high heat to steam the Seri Muka, the outer part of the custard will receive heat faster than the inner part. As a result, the inner part of the custard layer may not be fully cooked even the surface is set.



### To serve

Let the Seri Muka to cool down completely so that the custard become firm before removing it from the tray. It takes around two hours normally, depending on the size of the tray. Traditionally, Seri Muka is cut into diamond shape of about 3 cm width.

