

Red Chicken Curry (Gaeng phed kai)

The Thai name of this dish literally means "hot chicken curry." There is a very similar recipe for a green curry (Gaeng Khiao Wan Kai).

Curry Paste

Ingredients:

5 to 10 dried red chiles
10 cloves garlic, chopped
1 tsp. chopped galangal
1 Tbsp. thinly sliced lemon grass
1/2 tsp. zest of "kaffir" lime (ordinary lime will do)
1 tsp. chopped coriander (cilantro) root
5 black peppercorns
1 Tbsp. roasted coriander seeds
1 tsp. roasted cumin seeds
Dash of fish sauce
1 to 2 tsp. fermented shrimp paste (kapi)

Directions:

Mix in a mortar and pestle or food processor.

Will keep about a month in a fridge.

You can buy commercial red curry paste (Mae Ploy brand is quite good), but as far as I am aware all commercial pastes contain MSG and preservatives.

The curry

Ingredients:

6 oz. chicken (in smallish bite-size pieces)
1/2 c. coconut milk
4 oz. Thai eggplant (these are small round eggplants)
2 kaffir lime leaves (or a little lime zest)
1 Tbsp. sweet basil
2 Tbsp. fish sauce
1 Tbsp. palm sugar
Oil for cooking
1 to 3 Tbsp. red curry paste

Directions:

Cut the chicken up, then briefly fry the curry paste until fragrant, reduce the heat, add the coconut milk slowly, and continue to stir whilst cooking until a thin film of oil appears on the surface.

Add the chicken and other ingredients except the eggplant.

Let it come to a boil and cook until the chicken begins to change color.

Adjust the flavors to suit yourself.

When it is at a boil again add the eggplant and continue till the chicken is

cooked through.

Serve over rice, or in a serving bowl with other Thai dishes.