

Deep-Fried Fish with Rich Red Curry Recipe

Ingredients:

150 ml fresh coconut cream or 100 ml vegetable oil
4 tablespoons red curry paste (refer to list of Thailand recipes)
100 ml fish sauce
100 g palm sugar, shaved
400 ml coconut milk
4 kaffir lime leaves
2 long red chilies, seeded and sliced into uneven lengths
1 liter vegetable oil
1 x 800 g - 1 kg whole snapper, cleaned, or 2 x 180 g fillets snapper or other white-fleshed fish fillets
100 ml fish sauce
15 g Thai basil leaves
red chilies, julienne

Method:

Heat a heavy-based pan and add the coconut cream or vegetable oil. If using the coconut cream, keep cooking and stirring until it splits before you add the curry paste. If using the oil, fry the paste until fragrant and the oil is released. At this point, season with fish sauce and palm sugar, stirring constantly until the sugar has dissolved into the paste. Moisten with the coconut milk and bring to the boil. Add the lime leaves and chilies and taste for seasoning. Reduce the heat and simmer until thickened, about 5 minutes. Keep simmering on a low heat, stirring from time to time to prevent scorching. Taste and check for seasoning, adjusting as necessary. Meanwhile, heat the vegetable oil in a wok until just smoking. Score the whole fish on both sides and douse with fish sauce. If using fillets, rub with fish sauce. Lower the fish into the oil and fry until golden brown. Drain the fish and place on a serving plate. The curry sauce should now be quite thick, with a small film of oil on the top. Bring it back to a simmer, add the basil leaves, reserving a small handful for garnish. Spoon the curry sauce over the fish and garnish with the remaining basil leaves and some chili. A spoonful of coconut cream is also a good garnish, adding richness to the dish.