

## Gaeng Som Pla Isan Recipe

### (Spicy Sour Fish Soup)

#### Ingredients:

8 slices galangal  
2-4 hot Thai chilies, to taste  
4 cloves garlic, peeled and lightly crushed  
2 shallots, sliced coarsely  
1 lemongrass stalk, cut into 5-cm pieces (use only the bottom white part)  
1 liter fish stock\*  
4 kaffir lime leaves, torn  
500 g white fish fillets, sliced into 5-cm pieces  
8 cherry tomatoes, cut into halves  
Half a small pineapple, cut into pieces  
4 tablespoons tamarind juice  
3½ tablespoons fish sauce  
1 tablespoon fresh calamansi or lemon juice  
100 g straw or abalone mushroom  
1 tablespoon finely chopped coriander (cilantro)  
1 scallions, cut into 5-cm pieces  
2 sprigs of dill

#### Method:

Using a pestle and mortar, pound the galangal, chilies, garlic, shallots and lemongrass until fine. Heat 300 ml of the fish stock in a saucepan then add the pounded ingredients and the torn kaffir lime leaves. Bring to the boil then reduce the heat and simmer for 10 minutes to aromatize.

Add the remaining fish stock and bring to the boil once more then add the fish fillets. Cook for about 8 minutes, until the fish is done. Add the cherry tomatoes and pineapples and season with the tamarind juice, fish sauce and calamansi juice, then drop in the mushrooms and continue to cook for about 2 minutes. Serve the soup hot, sprinkled with coriander and chopped scallions. Garnish with dill sprigs.

#### \*Recipe for Fish Stock:

(Makes 1 liter)

2 kg fish heads and bones from fish such as snapper, cod, haddock  
2 liter water  
Pinch of salt  
5-cm knob ginger, peeled and lightly crushed

#### Method:

Heat a wok, add the fish heads and bones and fry for 5 minutes, stirring to prevent burning. Then remove and rinse the bones in boiling water to remove the smell, throwing the water away. In a stockpot, boil the 2 liter of water and add the fish bones and ginger. Boil for 5 minutes then simmer until the stock has reduced by about half. Remove from the heat and cool. Strain and discard the bones. This stock keeps for two weeks in a sealed container in the fridge.