

Lontong Recipe

(Singaporean rice cakes and vegetables in a coconut gravy recipe eaten for breakfast)

Ingredients: Serves 10

1 cup shallots, peeled
1 tablespoon belachan (shrimp paste)
1 teaspoon turmeric powder
4 tablespoons dried shrimps
2 buah keras (candlenuts)
5 dried chilies or 1 teaspoon chili powder
600 ml (2.5 cups) coconut milk, add water to make 2 liters (8 cups)
6 taukwa (firm soy bean cakes), cut into half and fried
½ medium-sized cabbage, shredded
300 g green beans, sliced
2 carrots, shredded
1 bangkwang (yam bean), peeled and shredded
10 hardboiled eggs, peeled
1 tablespoon salt
2 tablespoons sugar
1 cylinder of pressed rice cake, cut into wedges

Method:

Process finely shallots, belachan, dried shrimps, buah keras and dried chilies (the last two ingredients soaked first in hot water to soften) using a food chopper or mortar and pestle. Mix in the turmeric powder. Heat 2 tablespoons vegetable oil in a pot large enough to accommodate the vegetables and brown the spice paste over a moderate fire until fragrant. Add the shredded vegetables, the taukwa and enough water to barely cover the vegetables. Add salt and sugar. When it starts to simmer, add the coconut milk, stirring all the time till it comes to the boil to prevent the milk from curdling. Add the eggs and simmer for another 15 minutes. Taste and adjust seasoning if needed. To serve, place rice cakes (warmed first by steaming), taukwa and an egg on a deep plate. Pour over the gravy and some vegetables and serve, sprinkled with a spicy coconut dressing called serondeng and with bottled sambal chili on the side.

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