

Thora Malu Siyambala Achcharu Recipe (Sri Lankan Seer Fish Pickle with Tamarind Recipe)

Ingredients: Serves 10-12

500 g (1 lb) fish steaks
1 teaspoon salt
½ teaspoon ground turmeric
¼ cup oil
½ cup tamarind pulp
¾ cup vinegar
3 tablespoons ground coriander
1½ tablespoons ground cumin
3 teaspoons ground fennel
1 tablespoon chili powder
salt and sugar to taste

Method:

Wash the fish and dry well on paper towels. Cut steaks into serving pieces, rub over with salt and turmeric and leave to marinade for about 30 minutes. Heat oil in frying pan and fry marinated fish steaks until deep brown and crisp all over. Discard oil. Dissolve tamarind pulp in vinegar, squeezing between the fingers to release all the pulp from the seeds. Push through a fine nylon sieve, adding a little extra vinegar if necessary. Discard seeds and fibers left in sieve. In a dry pan roast the coriander, cumin and fennel separately for a few minutes until they smell aromatic and the color darkens slightly. Combine them with the tamarind pulp and chili powder. Pour over the fish slices in the pan and simmer for a few minutes. Add salt to taste and if liked, a little sugar. Store in clean dry bottles. Serve as an accompaniment with rice and curries.

Note: The popular seer fish of Sri Lanka and India is called Spanish mackerel in Australia. Any firm, dark-fleshed fish will be suitable.

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