INDONESIA / BALI UNCHARTED

BALI PORK AND COCONUT SOUP WITH BUMBU RAJANG

A one pot Balinese soup from Tenganan: braised pork in its own broth and thick coconut milk, built on a hand-chopped bumbu rajang, with leaves stirred in at the end. Kadek, the village chef, shows Will how it is done.



SERVES	PREP	COOK	TOTAL	DIFFICULTY	SPICE
4	40 min	2 h	2 h 40 min	Medium	Hot

INGREDIENTS

FOR THE BUMBU RAJANG

- 100 g shallots
- 25 g garlic
- 30 g ginger
- 30 g galangal
- 20 g turmeric
- 5 red chillies
- 1 tsp salt
- 1 tbsp coconut oil, for frying

FOR THE PORK BROTH

- 400 g pork shoulder, in large pieces
- 300 g pork belly, in large pieces
- 1.5 l water

FOR THE SOUP

- 400 ml first-press coconut milk
- 3 salam leaves (Indonesian bay leaves)
- 100 g papaya leaves, shredded
- 1 handful of basil leaves
- Salt, to taste

METHOD

MAKE THE PORK BROTH

1. Put the pork shoulder and belly in a pot with the water. Bring to the boil, skim, then simmer gently for 1 hour 30 minutes, until the meat is tender. Lift out the pork and keep the broth.

CHOP THE BUMBU RAJANG

2 Chop the shallots, garlic, ginger, galangal, turmeric and chillies by hand into a coarse paste. Chop, do not blend, so the aromatics keep their fragrance. Mix in the salt.

BUILD THE SOUP

3 Heat the coconut oil in a heavy pot over medium heat. Fry the bumbu rajang for 5 minutes, until fragrant.

4 Add the salam leaves and the coconut milk, then pour in 1 l of the pork broth. Stir and bring to a gentle simmer.

5 Cut the pork into bite-size pieces and add. Simmer for 15 minutes so the pork fat and coconut milk come together.

6 Season with salt. Stir in the papaya leaves and basil at the very end and take off the heat as soon as they wilt, so they stay green.

7 Serve hot with steamed rice.

USEFUL SHORTCUTS FOR HOME COOKS

Use the thick first press of coconut milk. Tinned full-fat coconut milk works well.

Pound or chop the paste by hand if you can. A blender will give a smoother, flatter result.

No papaya leaves? Use spinach or kale and add them in the last 2 minutes.

Will goes to Tenganan in east Bali to meet Kadek, a chef said to be the best cook in the village. Kadek goes into the jungle and picks everything himself, which Will calls a found and forage culture, and the reason these are known as the mountain people. At ceremonies everyone cooks together, and the offerings are made by the…