INDONESIA / A FOOD TRIP IN KALIMANTAN

BAMBOO FISH AND RICE

Fish and rice steamed inside bamboo over a wood fire, the way the Dayak cook in South Kalimantan. The fish is rubbed with candlenut, galangal and ginger flower and cooked in its own juices. At home, foil parcels in the oven give a close result.



SERVES	PREP	COOK	TOTAL	DIFFICULTY	SPICE
4	30 min	35 min	1 h 5 min	Medium	Medium

INGREDIENTS

FOR THE FISH PASTE

- 4 candlenuts
- 3 garlic cloves
- 2 shallots
- 20 g galangal, peeled
- 1 lemongrass stalk, tender part only

FOR THE FISH

- 800 g catfish (patin), cut into thick steaks
- 2 green chillies, sliced
- 2 shallots, sliced
- 1 tomato, cut into wedges
- 3 garlic cloves, chopped
- 1 torch ginger flower (bunga kecombrang), torn, optional
- 1 tsp salt
- 1 pinch sugar
- Banana leaves or turmeric leaves, for wrapping

FOR THE RICE

- 300 g jasmine rice, washed until the water runs clear
- Turmeric leaves or banana leaves, to wrap
- 200 ml water

METHOD

MAKE THE PASTE

1. Blend or pound the candlenuts, garlic, shallots, galangal and lemongrass into a rough paste.

MARINATE THE FISH

2 Rinse the fish and mix with the paste, chilli, shallot, tomato, garlic, torn ginger flower, salt and sugar. Leave for 15 minutes.

WRAP THE RICE

3 Fold the washed rice into 2 or 3 leaf parcels, leaving a little space for it to swell.

COOK OVER THE FIRE

4 Pack the fish and the rice parcels into cleaned bamboo lengths with the water, lined with leaves. Lay them at an angle over a wood fire and cook for about 30 minutes, turning once.

5 Crack the bamboo open. The fish should flake and the rice should be soft and fragrant.

AT HOME

6 Wrap the fish and marinade in banana leaf and foil. Bake at 200 degrees C for 25 minutes. Steam the rice in leaf parcels, or in a covered pot with the leaves, for 20 minutes.

USEFUL SHORTCUTS FOR HOME COOKS

Banana leaf is easier to find than turmeric leaf. Hold it over a flame for a few seconds to soften it before wrapping.

Ginger flower is optional. A little extra galangal and lemongrass keeps the flavour close.

Patin is a river catfish. Any firm white fish works.

After a couple of days with the Dayak people of South Kalimantan, Will and his travelling partner decide to cook what they learned. They go back to the forest, light a fire and make a kitchen out of nothing: rice and fish steamed inside bamboo.First the rice. It is washed until the water runs clear, folded into leaf parcels and…