SINGAPORE / SINGAPORE STREET FOOD

GULAI NANGKA, PADANG JACKFRUIT CURRY

Gulai nangka is young jackfruit simmered in a Padang spice paste with coconut milk, turmeric leaf and lemongrass until it soaks up the sauce. It is a vegetable dish with the weight of a meat curry.



SERVES	PREP	COOK	TOTAL	DIFFICULTY	SPICE
4	30 min	50 min	1 h 20 min	Medium	Hot

INGREDIENTS

FOR THE CURRY

- 1 kg young green jackfruit, peeled and cut into wedges (or 2 x 565 g tins young jackfruit in brine, drained)
- 300 ml coconut milk
- 600 ml water
- 2 lemongrass stalks, bruised
- 1 turmeric leaf, knotted
- 4 makrut lime leaves
- 2 salam leaves (or 1 bay leaf)
- 1 piece asam kandis (or 1 tbsp tamarind paste)
- 3 tbsp neutral oil
- Salt

FOR THE PASTE

- 8 shallots
- 5 garlic cloves
- 8 large red chillies, seeded
- 2 bird's eye chillies
- 30 g fresh turmeric (or 1 1/2 tsp ground)
- 30 g ginger
- 30 g galangal
- 4 candlenuts
- 1 tbsp coriander seeds, toasted and ground
- 1 tsp cumin seeds, toasted and ground

METHOD

PREPARE THE JACKFRUIT

1. Boil fresh jackfruit in salted water for 15 minutes, until you can push a knife in, and drain. Rinse tinned jackfruit well and squeeze gently.

COOK THE PASTE

2 Grind the paste ingredients until smooth.

3 Heat the oil in a wide pot over medium heat and fry the paste with the lemongrass, lime leaves, turmeric leaf and salam leaves for 8 to 10 minutes, until fragrant and the oil separates.

SIMMER

4 Add the jackfruit and turn it in the paste. Pour in the water, add the asam kandis and 1 1/2 tsp salt and simmer for 20 minutes.

5 Add the coconut milk and simmer gently for another 15 to 20 minutes, stirring now and then so it does not split, until the jackfruit is soft and the sauce is thick and orange.

6 Taste for salt and rest for 15 minutes before serving with rice.

USEFUL SHORTCUTS FOR HOME COOKS

Oil your knife and hands before cutting fresh jackfruit: the sap is very sticky.

Tinned young jackfruit in brine works well. Do not use ripe yellow jackfruit or jackfruit in syrup.

Add a handful of long beans or cabbage for the last 10 minutes to make it go further.

Gulai nangka, young jackfruit in a spiced coconut sauce, is one of the dishes you find on every Padang table. Will eats it twice in this series: at Sabar Menanti in Kampong Glam, and on the mixed Malay and Padang plate at Hjh Maimunah.At Sabar Menanti he says it is beautifully cooked, with a little bit less coconut milk than...