THAILAND / EXTREME FOOD ADVENTURES IN THAILAND

JOT PAK GAAK, LAMPANG PORK RIB SOUP

Jot pak gaak is a Lampang pork rib soup, built on a gelatinous pork broth, crispy garlic, ground yellow bean, tamarind and choy sum. It is a Northern Thai dish shaped by Burmese and Lanna cooking.



SERVES	PREP	COOK	TOTAL	DIFFICULTY	SPICE
4	20 min	2 h	2 h 20 min	Medium	Medium

INGREDIENTS

FOR THE PORK RIBS AND BROTH

1 kg pork ribs, cut into short pieces

2 l water

1 tsp salt

FOR THE SOUP

30 ml neutral oil

8 garlic cloves, pounded

4 shallots, sliced

1 tbsp ground yellow bean (dried fermented soybean powder)

1 tsp salt, or to taste

1 tbsp tamarind pulp

200 g choy sum, stems and leaves separated, stems cut into short pieces

TO SERVE

Steamed rice

METHOD

COOK THE RIBS

1. Put the ribs in a pot with the water and salt. Bring to a boil, skim, then simmer gently for 1 1/2 hours until the meat is tender and the broth is cloudy and rich. Keep the ribs and 1.2 l of the broth.

BUILD THE SOUP

2. Heat the oil in a pot over medium heat and fry the garlic until crisp and golden. Add the shallots and fry until soft.
3. Stir in the ground yellow bean and the salt for 30 seconds.
4. Add the ribs and the broth and bring to a simmer. Add the choy sum stems and cook for 3 minutes, as they take longer.
5. Add the tamarind and the choy sum leaves and cook for 1 minute more. Taste and adjust the salt and the sour.

SERVE

6 Ladle into bowls, or into a clay pot over hot coals if you have one, and serve with rice.

USEFUL SHORTCUTS FOR HOME COOKS

Ground yellow bean is sold in Thai shops as dried fermented soybean. Thai thua nao or miso loosened in warm water is a rough substitute.

Cook the ribs a day ahead. Chill the broth and lift off the fat if you want a lighter soup.

Keep the broth cooking at a bare simmer. A hard boil makes it greasy, not rich.

Will is in the centre of Lampang, near Chiang Mai, in a heritage building about 50 years old. He talks about how Burmese, Lao, Yuan and Lanna Thai cooking merged here, before Thailand took its present shape.He cooks one of the owner's favourite dishes, a pork rib soup with crispy garlic, shallots, ground yellow beans, tamarind and choy sum. The...