WILL MEYRICK

THAILAND

PALACE PORK STIR-FRY WITH SHRIMP PASTE

A pork stir-fry from the Royal Palace kitchens, cooked at Baan Kieng Phu in Chiang Mai. A pounded paste of dried shrimp, garlic, chilli and shrimp paste coats pork neck and belly, finished with lime and Thai basil.



SERVES	PREP	COOK	TOTAL	DIFFICULTY	SPICE
4	25 min	15 min	40 min	Medium	Hot

INGREDIENTS

FOR THE PASTE

- 20 g dried shrimp, soaked and drained
- 60 g garlic (about 1/4 cup)
- 6 bird's eye chillies
- 1 tbsp shrimp paste
- 2 lemongrass stalks, finely sliced
- 20 g galangal, sliced
- 3 shallots, sliced

FOR THE STIR-FRY

- 30 ml neutral oil
- 300 g pork neck, thinly sliced
- 200 g pork belly, thinly sliced
- 1 tbsp fish sauce
- 1 tsp sugar
- 2 tbsp lime juice
- 1 handful Thai basil leaves

TO SERVE

- Steamed rice

METHOD

MAKE THE PASTE

1. Pound the dried shrimp to a fluff. Add the garlic and chillies and pound, then add the shrimp paste, lemongrass, galangal and shallots and pound to a coarse paste.

COOK THE PORK

2. Heat the oil in a wok over medium-high heat. Fry the paste for 2 to 3 minutes until fragrant and the oil starts to separate.

3 Add the pork neck and belly and stir-fry for 5 to 6 minutes until cooked through and lightly caramelised. Use both cuts, as the belly adds fat and the neck keeps it juicy.

4 Add the fish sauce and sugar and toss. Take off the heat and add the lime juice and Thai basil.

SERVE

5 Taste, adjust, and serve with steamed rice.

USEFUL SHORTCUTS FOR HOME COOKS

Pork neck is lean with some fat and belly is rich. Using both gives a better texture than one alone.

Shrimp paste adds depth to many Thai pastes and soups. Where it is not used, fermented fish sauce does the same job.

Add the lime and basil off the heat so they stay fresh.

At Baan Kieng Phu in Chiang Mai, Khun Bright shares a recipe from the kitchens of the Royal Palace. It was served to the palace staff, not the royal family, and was made from leftovers: a chilli and shrimp paste dip mixed with some stir-fried beef.Today she makes it with pork. Will pounds the paste himself, with dried shrimp, garlic,...