INDONESIA / BALI UNCHARTED

SAMBAL LONTO

Sambal lonto is a Bali Aga mountain sambal of pork, ginger, chilli and shrimp paste, stir-fried in coconut oil until the fat renders into the paste. Eat it with rice, by hand.



SERVES	PREP	COOK	TOTAL	DIFFICULTY	SPICE
4	20 min	15 min	35 min	Easy	Hot

INGREDIENTS

200 g pork belly, finely diced

4 shallots, finely sliced
3 garlic cloves, finely chopped
20 g ginger, finely chopped
5 red chillies, finely chopped
1 tsp shrimp paste (terasi), toasted
2 tbsp coconut oil
Salt, to taste

TO SERVE

Steamed rice
Banana leaf or other leaf for wrapping, optional
A bowl of clear pork soup, optional

METHOD

1. Mix the pork with the shallots, garlic, ginger, chilli and shrimp paste in a bowl. Work it with your hands so everything breaks down and binds.
2. Heat the coconut oil in a wok over medium to high heat.
3. Add the mixture and stir-fry for 8 to 10 minutes. The pork fat should render out and the paste should turn deep and fragrant.
4. Keep stirring so nothing catches. The sambal is ready when the pork is cooked through and the oil has separated.
5. Taste, then add salt at the very end, as Kadek does.
6. Serve warm with steamed rice, ideally on a leaf, and eat by hand.

USEFUL SHORTCUTS FOR HOME COOKS

Toast the shrimp paste for a minute in a dry pan first. It smells strong but gives the depth.

Pork belly with a good layer of fat works best. Lean pork will dry out.

Coconut oil gives the right flavour. If you only have neutral oil, finish with a spoon of grated fresh coconut.

Will is in a Bali Aga mountain village cooking with Kadek, who runs the kitchen. Here it is the men who cook. In the village Will visited, only men were allowed in that kitchen, and everything is done by hand.The dish is sambal lonto: pork, ginger, chilli and shrimp paste, mixed and stir-fried in coconut oil that the family makes...