WILL MEYRICK

SINGAPORE / SINGAPORE STREET FOOD

SAMBAL UDANG

Sambal udang is prawns cooked in a red sambal built on chilli, shallot and toasted shrimp paste (terasi), with sliced onion and a touch of sweetness. It is a staple of Malay and Padang rice tables, here from Hj Maimunah in Singapore.



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

INGREDIENTS

FOR THE SAMBAL PASTE

8 large red chillies, deseeded if you want less heat

4 shallots, peeled

3 garlic cloves

1 tsp terasi (shrimp paste), toasted

FOR THE PRAWNS

500 g raw prawns, peeled with tails on

4 tbsp neutral oil

1 onion, cut into thick slices

1 tbsp tamarind pulp mixed with 3 tbsp water

1 tbsp palm sugar or brown sugar

Salt, to taste

TO SERVE

Steamed rice

METHOD

MAKE THE PASTE

1 Toast the terasi in a dry pan for 1 minute until fragrant. Blend the chillies, shallots, garlic and terasi into a coarse paste.

COOK THE SAMBAL

2 Heat the oil in a wok over medium heat. Fry the paste for 6 to 8 minutes, stirring often, until the raw smell is gone and the oil separates and turns red.

ADD THE PRAWNS

3 Stir in the sliced onion and cook for 2 minutes. Add the tamarind water and sugar, then the prawns.

FINISH

4 Cook for 3 to 4 minutes over medium-high heat, until the prawns are pink and curled and the sambal clings to them. Season with salt and serve with steamed rice.

USEFUL SHORTCUTS FOR HOME COOKS

Toast terasi in a dry pan with the window open. The smell is strong, but it is what makes the sambal.

Leave the seeds in the chillies for more heat, or use half curly chilli and half bird's eye.

Do not overcook the prawns. They go in for 3 to 4 minutes at the end.

The sambal paste keeps for 5 days in the fridge, so make a double batch.

In episode 4 of his Singapore street food journey, Will visits Hj Maimunah, a Malay and Padang restaurant on the Michelin Bib Gourmand list since 2016. There is a long queue, and as Will says, it is all locals and no foreigners.The spread has rendang, sambal udang, fried eggs with balado, acar, gulai nangka, babat and gulai babat, and grilled...