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|  | **Ingredients** | **Steps** |
| ***Spicy braised fish stew*** | * **2** small potatoes, cut into 2cm pieces * **5** small Asian red eschalots (see Note), finely chopped * **3** garlic cloves, finely chopped * **4 cm** piece ginger, finely chopped * **1** long red chilli, finely chopped * **2½ tbsp** vegetable oil * **350 ml** fish stock or water * **3** tomatoes, finely chopped * **4** mace blades (see Note) * **3** cloves * **60 ml** (¼ cup) kecap manis (see Note) * **4 x 170 g** freshwater fish fillets, such as barramundi or perch, skin removed * pinch of sugar, to taste * **160 g** bean vermicelli (glass noodles) or rice stick noodles, soaked in boiling water for 2 minutes * coriander sprigs, sliced cucumber and sliced red bird’s-eye chillies, to serve | * Cook potatoes in pan of boiling salted water for 8 minutes or until just tender. Drain and set aside. * Place eschalots, garlic, ginger and chilli in a food processor and process to a paste. * Heat oil in a frying pan over medium heat, add paste and cook for 3 minutes or until golden and fragrant. Add stock, tomatoes, mace and cloves, and bring to a simmer. Season with salt and pepper, and cook for 10 minutes. Stir in kecap manis, then add fish and cook for 5 minutes. Add reserved potatoes and cook for a further 5 minutes or until fish is just cooked. Add sugar and season. * Drain noodles and divide among serving bowls. Ladle over stew, then scatter over coriander, sliced cucumber and sliced chillies. |
| ***Steamed banana cakes with coconut custard*** | * **200 g** unsalted butter, softened * **200 g** brown sugar * **2** eggs * **350 g** (about 3) mashed bananas * **200 g** (1â…“ cups) self-raising flour * **Â¼ tsp** bicarbonate of soda   **Topping**   * **150 g** brown sugar * **2** bananas, thickly sliced into 24   **Coconut custard**   * **300 ml** thickened cream * **300 ml** coconut milk * **110 g** (Â½ cup) caster sugar * **2** egg yolks * **1 tsp** vanilla extract | * To make coconut custard, place cream and coconut milk in a saucepan over medium–high heat and bring to just below boiling point. Place caster sugar, egg yolks and vanilla in a bowl, whisking to combine. Slowly add cream mixture, whisking constantly, then pour into a clean saucepan over medium heat. * Cook, stirring, for 5 minutes or until custard is thick enough to coat the back of a spoon. Cool to room temperature, then cover surface with plastic wrap and chill until needed. * Preheat oven to 180°C. Grease 8 x 250 ml ovenproof moulds. To make topping, place brown sugar and 1 tbsp water in a small saucepan over low heat, stirring to dissolve. Divide among prepared moulds, then arrange 3 banana slices in base of each. Set aside. * Using an electric mixer, beat butter and brown sugar until pale and fluffy. Add eggs one at a time, beating well after each addition. Beat in mashed bananas, then fold in flour and bicarbonate of soda. Divide batter among prepared moulds, then cover each with greased baking paper and a pleated sheet of foil, securing with kitchen string. Place moulds in a deep baking dish and pour in enough boiling water to come halfway up sides of moulds. Bake for 45 minutes or until a skewer inserted in centre comes out clean. Turn out and serve with coconut custard. |
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| ***Chicken noodle soup*** | * **1.2 kg** chicken * **8** French shallots, roughly chopped * **2 stalks** lemongrass, bruised * **8 cm** x 2 cm piece fresh ginger, sliced * **6** garlic cloves * **3 tsp** ground turmeric * **3 tsp** ground coriander * **2 tbsp** vegetable oil * **1** tomato, chopped * **2** spring onions, roughly chopped, white and green parts separated * salt and pepper * **250 ml** (1 cup) coconut milk (optional) * **150 g** mung bean vermicelli (see Note)   **To serve**   * steamed rice * **100 g** beansprouts * **2 tbsp** deep fried shallots * **2** limes, quartered * sambal oelek (see Note) | * Place the chicken in a large stock pot with half each of the shallots, lemongrass and ginger, and 2 garlic cloves. Cover with 3 litres cold water and bring to a simmer. Cook for 50 minutes, skimming the surface regularly. Turn off the heat and allow to cool in the stock for 20 minutes. Transfer the chicken to a large plate. Strain and reserve the stock, discarding the solids. When cool enough to handle, roughly shred the chicken and set aside. * Place the remaining shallot, ginger and garlic in the bowl of a food processor along with the turmeric, coriander and 1 tablespoon oil, and process until a paste forms. * Heat the remaining oil in a large saucepan over medium heat. Add the paste and remaining lemongrass stalk and cook for 5â€“6 minutes until the paste looses its raw smell. Pour in the reserved chicken stock and bring to the boil. Add the tomato and white part of the spring onion, reduce the heat and simmer for 20 minutes. Add the chicken and coconut milk, if using, return to a simmer and cook for 3 minutes. Season to taste. * Meanwhile, cook mung bean vermicelli in boiling water for 2 minutes, then drain. Rinse with cold water and drain again. * Transfer the chicken soup to a serving dish and place in the centre of the table. Place all remaining ingredients in separate bowls on the table. To serve, add some rice to a bowl, top with vermicelli and bean sprouts. Ladle some chicken and soup over the rice and top with deep-fried shallots and the green part of the spring onion. Squeeze over lime juice and serve sambal oelek to the side. |