

Better Thai Peanut Sauce (Nam Jim Thua)

Ingredients

Coconut cream	1 cup	Garlic cloves, minced	3
Thai red curry paste	2 Tbsp.	Fresh lime juice	2 Tbsp.
Natural peanut butter	1 cup	Roasted peanuts, crushed . . .	¼ cup
Palm sugar (or brown sugar) .	¼ cup	Salt	½ tsp.
Fish sauce	2 Tbsp.	Water	¼-½ cup
Tamarind paste	1 Tbsp.		
Fresh ginger, minced	1 Tbsp.		

Directions

Mince **ginger** and **garlic** — Crush **roasted peanuts** — Juice **lime** — Chop **palm sugar** if using block form

1. In a heavy-bottomed saucepan over medium heat, cook **coconut cream** until it begins to separate and the oil rises to the surface, about *3-4 minutes*.
2. Add **Thai red curry paste** to the separated coconut cream and fry until fragrant and the oil turns slightly red, about *2 minutes*.
3. Reduce heat to medium-low. Add **peanut butter** and stir constantly until well combined and smooth, about *2 minutes*.
4. Add **palm sugar**, **fish sauce**, and **tamarind paste**. Stir until sugar dissolves completely, about *2 minutes*.
5. Add minced **ginger** and **garlic**. Cook for *1 minute* until fragrant.
6. Add ¼ cup **water** and simmer for *3-4 minutes*, stirring occasionally. Add more **water** if needed to reach desired consistency.
7. Remove from heat and stir in **lime juice**, **crushed peanuts**, and **salt**. Taste and adjust seasoning if needed.
8. Let cool for *10 minutes* before serving. Sauce will thicken as it cools.

Equipment Required

- Heavy-bottomed saucepan (2-quart)
- Wooden spoon or silicone spatula
- Measuring cups and spoons
- Microplane or fine grater (for ginger)
- Garlic press (optional)
- Mortar and pestle (or food processor for peanuts)
- Fine-mesh strainer (optional)
- Glass storage container with lid
- Citrus juicer
- Sharp knife and cutting board

Mise en Place

- Have all ingredients measured and ready before starting
- Bring **peanut butter** to room temperature
- Mince aromatics just before cooking
- Crush **peanuts** ahead of time
- If using block **palm sugar**, chop finely

Ingredient Tips

- Use natural, unsweetened **peanut butter** for best results
- Coconut cream, not milk, provides proper thickness
- Mae Ploy or Maesri **curry paste** recommended
- Palm sugar preferred, but brown sugar works well
- Fresh **lime juice** only - never bottled
- Use Thai fish sauce (Nam Pla) for authentic flavor

Preparation Tips

- Watch coconut cream carefully - it should separate but not burn
- Stir constantly when adding **peanut butter** to prevent sticking
- Sauce will thicken significantly as it cools
- For extra smooth sauce, strain through fine-mesh strainer
- Add **water** gradually to control consistency
- Reserve some **crushed peanuts** for garnish

Make Ahead & Storage

- Keeps refrigerated for up to *1 week*
- Bring to room temperature before serving
- Reheat gently over low heat, stirring frequently
- Add warm water to thin if needed after refrigeration
- Freeze for up to *3 months*

Serving Suggestions

- Perfect for chicken satay or grilled meats
- Serve with fresh spring rolls
- Use as a dip for raw vegetables
- Thin with coconut milk for salad dressing
- Drizzle over grilled chicken or shrimp
- Garnish with extra **crushed peanuts** and cilantro