

HERBED WILD RICE with coconut and lime V

I've always wanted to be the kind of cook who has a flourishing garden, but I haven't quite got there. Instead, I tend to buy large bunches of herbs from my greengrocer, but even with the best intentions they often languish at the bottom of the fridge. When that happens, this recipe is the perfect remedy. It's based on the Malaysian recipe nasi ulam, in which various herbs and toasted coconut are mixed into boiled rice. All you need to do is boil the rice, mix in the other ingredients, and voila, you have a meal: tasty enough to eat by itself or as part of a bigger spread.

note / If you can't find toasted coconut flakes, buy plain ones and toast them for a couple of minutes in a dry pan to bring out the lovely nutty sweetness.

Serves 2 for lunch or 4 as part of a main meal /

1 cup + 1 tbsp wild rice
1 cup basmati rice
1 tbsp salt
 $\frac{1}{2}$ cup shredded Thai basil leaves
 $\frac{1}{3}$ cup shredded mint leaves
 $\frac{1}{3}$ cup finely chopped cilantro
1 cup fried onions (storebought)
 $\frac{1}{2}$ cup roasted unsalted peanuts
3 tbsp lime juice (from 2 limes)
3 tbsp canola oil
1 tbsp soy sauce
 $\frac{1}{4}$ cup toasted coconut flakes

Wash the rice in a few changes of cold water until the water runs clear, then leave to soak for 20 minutes in cold water. Drain, then place in a lidded saucepan with $6\frac{1}{2}$ cups of freshly boiled water and bring to the boil. Add the salt, and simmer for 20 minutes until the rice is tender. Drain the rice, put it back into the saucepan, cover with the lid, and allow to rest for 10 minutes.

After the rice has rested, allow to cool a little then add all the other ingredients and mix well. Taste and adjust the seasoning if need be, and transfer to a serving platter to serve.

