

The Retired Bloke's Siamese eCookBook

By Darin Wayne



Seven easy to prepare Thai recipes
One week of Thai food that even I can make.

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Introduction

I have been living (and eating) in Thailand for a long time. Among the many attractions that keep me here include the friendly people, warm climate, exotic culture, and of course the fantastic food. Each day leads to new culinary treats, whether they be at fancy restaurants, outdoor markets, road-side push carts, or in our own kitchen. I have included here 7 of my favorite Thai dishes that are easy to prepare, even for us retired blokes. You'll be able to prepare a different Thai meal each day of the week. They have been chosen for their attractiveness to the westerner's palate as well as their ease in preparation, especially in the western kitchen.

In these recipes I have included the ingredients in English, Thai, and Thai phonetics. Sometimes these ingredients will not be available to those living in the west (unless there is a nearby Chinatown). Because of these we give substitutes that can be made with ingredients and spices that any western cook could easily pick up at the supermarket.

When a Thai cook tells you how to make something she will usually not give exact amounts. She may say something like, "Use as much garlic as you should." Westerners are used to being given exact quantities in their recipes. Because of this we have given "suggested" amounts. Feel free to use as much of any ingredient "as you should".

If you are in Thailand and don't speak much Thai simply copy off the recipes with its list of ingredients (with the Thai translations) and bring that with you to the market. If you tell the food sellers what you are making they will be happy to get you what you need.

Language note:

Each recipe includes a discussion of some of the Thai words that make up the ingredients. If you know the origin of a word it is much easier to remember it when you go on down to the market and have to tell the vendor in Thai what it is you are looking for.

Day 1: Chicken with Cashews



ไก่ผัดเม็ดมะม่วงหิมพานต์

gài pàt mét-má~mûang-hĩm-má~paan

Cashew nuts are grown in the southern part of Thailand and this dish is very popular all around the country (and increasingly in Thai restaurants around the world). It is not uncommon for a westerner, upon tasting this dish for the first time, to swoon with delight.

What you need

- | | | |
|-----------------------------|--------------------|---------------------------------|
| • 1/2lb diced chicken | ไก่ | <i>gài</i> |
| • 1 cup roasted cashews | เม็ดมะม่วงหิมพานต์ | <i>mét-má~mûang-hĩm-má~paan</i> |
| • A few large dried peppers | พริกแห้ง | <i>prík hâeng</i> |
| • 1 clove garlic | กระเทียม | <i>grà~tiam</i> |

- 3 tbs vegetable oil น้ำมันพืช *nám-man-péut*
- 1 tbs soy sauce ซีอิ้ว *see-íw*

What you do

- Heat the oil in a frying pan, or a wok until very hot.
- Into the hot oil toss the minced garlic and
- Wait until it becomes golden brown.
- Then quickly add the chicken and stir fry until it also is brown.
- Add the cashews, peppers, and soy sauce until the cashews are hot.

Serves two, as a side dish or over rice as a complete meal.

Often in Thailand you will not be able to find roasted cashews but the raw ones are available in most places. To roast them yourself, get some raw cashews, take a pan or wok, add some oil and fry up the cashews adding some salt to taste. Make sure the cashews don't get too brown or they will be bitter.

Language note:

The Thai word for "cashew" (*met ma muaang him-a phaen*) is made up of the words

เม็ด	<i>mét</i>	seed, nut
มะม่วง	<i>má~múang</i>	mango
หิม	<i>hím-má</i>	snow, from the same root as Himalaya
หิมพานต์	<i>hím-má~paan</i>	a snow covered forest in northern India

The cashew "nut" or seed comes from a pseudo fruit (called a cashew apple) that in shape resembles a mango but comes in different colors. The

real fruit and the seeds grow out of the bottom. The words "*him-a phaar*" indicate the foreign origin of the cashew tree. Its true origin is Brazil but there are lots of cashews in India which may have been the origins of the Thai cashews.

Day 2: Pork with Garlic and Black Pepper



หมูทอดกระเทียมพริกไทย

mǎo tót grà~tiam prík-tai

This is my personal favorite. If you have never been into garlic before, you will now. The oil, pepper, and garlic alone is great with rice if you are low on cash at the end of the month when your pension check hasn't arrived yet.

What you need

- | | | |
|---------------------------------------|-----------|---------------------|
| • ½ lb sliced pork | หมูแผ่น | <i>mǎo pàen</i> |
| • 2 cloves minced garlic | กระเทียม | <i>grà~tiam</i> |
| • 3 tbs vegetable oil | น้ำมันพืช | <i>nám-man-pêut</i> |
| • 3-4 shakes black pepper | พริกไทย | <i>prík-tai</i> |
| • ½ tbs fish sauce (or salt to taste) | น้ำปลา | <i>nám-bplaa</i> |

What you do

- Fry the pork in the oil until thoroughly cooked.
- Then add the garlic.
- When the garlic is brown stir in the black pepper and fish sauce.
- Serve with or over rice.

Language note:

พริกไทย *prik-tai* พริกข = pepper, ไทย = Thai. So พริกไทย is translated to mean Thai pepper, which is their word for black pepper as opposes to Chillies.

น้ำปลา *nám-bplaa* literally means “fish water” or fish sauce. It is made with fermented fish, smells terrible alone, but is what Thai cooks use instead of table salt. Once it is cooked with the food the bad smell goes away.

Day 3: Stuffed Tomatoes



มะเขือเทศใส่

ma kheuua thaeht sai

This is an “old family recipe”. It is an easy, tasty combination that goes just as well with rice as it does with western food.

What you need

- | | | |
|---------------------------------------|------------|-------------------------|
| • 6 small tomatoes | มะเขือเทศ | <i>má~kěua-tâyt</i> |
| • ½ lb of ground pork | หมูสับ | <i>mǎo sàp</i> |
| • 2 cloves minced garlic | กระเทียม | <i>grà~tiam</i> |
| • ¼ onion, chopped | หัวหอม | <i>hǔa-hǒm</i> |
| • Black pepper | พริกไทย | <i>prík-tai</i> |
| • 4 tbs fish sauce (or salt to taste) | น้ำปลา | <i>nám-bplaa</i> |
| • Some sprigs of parsley | ผักชีฝรั่ง | <i>pàk-chee-fà~ràng</i> |

What you do

- With a sharp knife cut out the tops of the tomatoes.
- Spoon out the pulp and seeds.
- To the ground pork, add the minced garlic, chopped onion, pepper and fish sauce.
- Mix together and stuff into the tomatoes.
- Place the tomatoes in a ceramic plate or bowl and put into a steamer for about 15 minutes.
- Be sure not to steam too long or the tomatoes will break down.
- Garnish with parsley and serve as a side dish.

Language note:

หัวหอม *hǔa-hǒm* means the fragrant blub.

ผักชีฝรั่ง *pàk-chee-fà~ràng* means the foreign cilantro or parsley.

Day 4: Fried Pumpkin



ฟักทองทอด

fak thaawng thaawt

The pumpkin is more than jack-o-lanterns and pumpkin pie. In Asia, it is one of the staples in the people's diet. With its wealth of vitamins A and C, the pumpkin (as well as many related squashes and gourds) is prepared in many ways. We feel that this recipe is the tastiest as well as the easiest to make.

What you need

- | | | |
|---------------------------------------|-----------------|-----------------------------|
| • one pound section of pumpkin | ฟักทอง | <i>fák-tong</i> |
| • 1 clove minced garlic | กระเทียม | <i>grà~tiam</i> |
| • 1/4 cup vegetable oil | น้ำมันพืช | <i>nám-man-pêut</i> |
| • 2 eggs | ไข่ | <i>gài</i> |
| • 1 tbs sugar (or honey) | น้ำตาล, น้ำผึ้ง | <i>nám-dtaan, nám-pêung</i> |
| • 2 tbs fish sauce (or salt to taste) | น้ำปลา | <i>nám-bplaa</i> |

What you do

- First take the pumpkin and cut it into slices about 1/4" thick.
- It will then be easy to cut off the skin.
- After that, slice the pumpkin into 1" squares.
- Pour the oil into a frying pan or wok.
- Wait until the oil is very hot and then toss in the minced garlic.
- The garlic will bubble up and turn brown.
- Then add the pumpkin, sugar, and fish sauce.
- Now add enough water so that it comes up to the top of the pumpkin.
- Cover and let boil until the water has almost evaporated.
- Finally, break the eggs into the center of the mixture and gently fold them in.
- When the eggs are done, so is your pumpkin.
- Serve as a side dish or over rice.

Language note:

ฟักทอง *fák-tong* is the golden "fák", which is not droppin the "F" bomb. ฟัก means a squash or mellon.

น้ำผึ้ง *nám-pêung* literally means the liquid from the bee, or honey, of course.

Day 5: Sweet and Sour (Pork, Chicken, Shrimp, etc)



เปรี้ยวหวาน

bpriiao waan

This popular Chinese restaurant dish has also been adopted by the Thais. The Thais of course have changed the recipe to suit their own taste buds. I like them both but they are quite different.

What you need

- 1/2 lb of pork, diced หมู *mǎo*
You can also use chicken or shrimp
- 1/2 large onion หัวหอม *hǔa-hǒm*
- 2 tomatoes มะเขือเทศ *má~kěua-tâyt*
- 1 cucumber แตงกวา *dtaeng-gwaa*
- 1 clove minced garlic กระเทียม *grà~tiam*
- 2 tbls fish sauce (or salt to น้ำปลา *nám-bplaa*

taste)

- 1 teaspoon vinegar น้ำส้ม *nám-sôm*
- 1 teaspoon tomato paste
- 1 tbs corn starch แป้งข้าวโพด *bpâeng kâao-pôht*
- 3 tbs vegetable oil น้ำมันพืช *nám-man-pêut*

What you do

- Heat the oil in a pan or wok over high flame.
- Fry the garlic in oil until brown.
- Put in the pork (or chicken or shrimp).
- When this is cooked add the onion and stir for 1 minute.
- Add cucumber, fish sauce, soy sauce .
- Pour in one cup of water.
- As soon as this boils put in the corn starch that has been mixed with a little cold water.
- Then add vinegar and tomato paste.
- When the sauce thickens then your dish is ready.

Language note:

มะเขือเทศ *má~kěua-tâyt* comes from the words มะเขือ which means eggplant and เทศ which means foreign. So a tomato, which originally came from South America, is a “foreign eggplant”.

น้ำส้ม *nám-sôm* literally means “sour liquid”, which is what vinegar is.

Day 6: Barbecued Spare Ribs



ซี่โครงหมู

see khrohng muu

There is nothing I like better than chomping down on some good ribs. And the Thais makes some good ribs.

What you need

- 1 lb spare ribs ซี่โครงหมู *êe-krohng mòo*
- 1 tbs bean sauce or bean paste ตำเจี้ยว *dtâo-jîeow*
(in the west you may have to go to a Chinatown to get this. If you can't find it then double the amount of soy sauce.)
- 1 tbs sugar น้ำตาล *nám-dtaan*
- 2 cloves diced garlic กระเทียม *grà~tiam grà~tiam*

- 1 tbs black soy sauce ซีอิ๊วดำ *see-íw dam*
- black pepper พริกไทย *prik-tai*

What you do

- Cut up the spare ribs.
- Mix the bean sauce, sugar, garlic, soy sauce, and pepper together.
- Cover the spare ribs with this mixture and spread evenly over each rib.
- Put this all in a bowl and cover and let stand for about one hour.
- Roast in medium oven for about 20 minutes or until golden brown.

Language note:

ซีอิ๊วดำ *see-íw dam* is made up of two words, ซีอิ๊ว which is the word (Chinese origin) for soy sauce, and ดำ which is the Thai word for black. There are many kinds of soy sauce, not just Kikkoman. In Thailand there are Black and White soy sauces.

Day 7: Thai Basil Chicken Fried Rice



ข้าวผัดกะเพราไก่

Khao Pad Kra Prao Gai

Easy and quick to make with a taste that explodes in your mouth. It can easily be the hottest dish in Thailand, depending on how many chilies you throw in. I stick with only one.

What you need

- 4 cups "already cooked" jasmine rice or long grain rice (let the rice cool before using it in the fried rice recipe) ข้าวหอมมะลิ *kâao hǒm má~li*
- 6 big cloves garlic (crushed) กระเทียม *grà~tiam*
- 2 to 4 Thai red and green chili peppers พริกชี้หู *prík kê nõo*
- or 1 to 2 Serrano peppers (crushed) outside Thailand

• ¼ cup cooking oil	น้ำมันพืช	<i>nám-man-péut</i>
• 1 to 1 ½ lbs chicken meat (cut into bite sizes)	ไก่	<i>gài</i>
• 3 tbs oyster sauce	น้ำมันหอย	<i>nám-man hǒi</i>
• 2 tbs fish sauce	น้ำปลา	<i>nám-bplaa</i>
• 1 tsp sugar	น้ำตาล	<i>nám-dtaan</i>
• 1 medium size red bell pepper (julienne)	พริกหยวก	<i>prík-yùak</i>
• 2 cups fresh sweet basil leaves	โหระพา	<i>hǒh-rá~paa</i>
• ½ cup cilantro sprigs for garnish	ผักชี	<i>pàk-chee</i>

What to do

- First, heat the oil in a deep pan or wok over high heat.
- Wait till the oil starts to smoke.
- Add crushed garlic and crushed chili peppers
- Stir quickly (don't let them burn)
- Then immediately add sliced chicken meat
- Stir
- Add oyster sauce, fish sauce, sugar
- Stir until the chicken is cooked through
- Add already cooked rice
- Stir quickly until sauces are blended with rice (a couple of minutes)
- Stir in red bell peppers and keep stirring for few seconds then add basil leaves,
- Turn the heat off.
- Garnish with sliced cucumbers and cilantro sprigs.
- Serve Immediately

Language note:

ข้าวหอมมะลิ *kâao hǒm má~li* literally means fragrant jasmine rice. In a rice culture like Thailand there can be hundreds of varieties of rice. In the world there thousands of rice varieties

พริกขี้หนู *prík kêe nõo* means “rat turd chilli”. That is what they look like but beware. These are the hot ones.

This last recipe is from my friends at **Thai Food Tonight**

<http://www.thaifoodtonight.com/>. Check out their great cooking videos.