

# COOKING AT REN

March 1, 2012

## Crispy Thai Shrimp Cakes

2 lb shrimp, shells and tail removed  
3 cup panko bread crumbs plus about 1 for the crust  
2" piece of fresh ginger, peeled and chopped  
2 kaffir lime leaf, cut into thin strips or lime zest  
2 egg  
2 green onion, trimmed and chopped  
1 large handful cilantro  
2 fat garlic clove, chopped  
2 tea Asian fish sauce

Rinse the shrimp and drain. Combine the shrimp with 3 cup panko and the rest of the ingredients in a food processor. Process until you have a uniform paste.

In a large frying pan, heat 1/4" canola oil over medium heat. Use a large spoon to scoop out the shrimp mixture, and form a 1" flat round cake with your hands. Press it into a shallow bowl filled with the 1 c. panko, coating both sides.

Fry the cakes, careful not crowd, for 2-3 minutes per side. Drain on paper towels. Between batches, scoop out the bits of panko left over and replenish the oil. Serve with Plum Sauce

## Thai Cucumber Salad

1/2 cup fresh lime juice  
3 tablespoons fish sauce  
3 tablespoons sugar  
3 tablespoons minced seeded  
jalapeño chili (about 1 large)  
4 garlic cloves, minced  
3 English hothouse cucumbers,  
halved, seeded, thinly sliced  
1 1/2 cup sliced red onion  
6 tablespoons chopped fresh  
mint  
6 tablespoons coarsely chopped  
lightly salted roasted peanuts

Whisk first 5 ingredients in  
medium bowl.

Place cucumbers, onion, and  
mint in large bowl. Add  
dressing and toss to coat.

Season salad to taste with salt  
and pepper. Sprinkle with  
peanuts and serve.

## Plum Sauce

1 cup plum preserves or plum jam  
 2 tablespoons rice wine vinegar  
 1 tablespoon minced onions  
 1 teaspoon honey  
 1 teaspoon minced fresh ginger  
 1/2 teaspoon minced garlic  
 1/2 teaspoon crushed red pepper flakes

In a small saucepan, bring all the ingredients to a boil. Reduce the heat and simmer, stirring, until the preserves are melted, about 5 minutes.

Remove from the heat and adjust the seasoning to taste. Let cool to room temperature before serving.

Makes 1 1/4 cups

## Thai Chile Sauce

1/2 cup rice wine vinegar  
 1/2 cup brown sugar  
 2 or 3 tiny Thai chiles, red or green, thinly sliced  
 4 tablespoons chopped or crushed roasted unsalted peanuts  
 4 teaspoons fish sauce  
 2 teaspoon grated ginger

To make the dipping sauce, combine all ingredients in a small bowl.

## Thai Red-Curry Squash Soup

4 tablespoons unsalted butter  
 1 large onion, thinly sliced  
 1/4 cup thinly sliced fresh ginger, plus 1 cup slivered fresh ginger  
 2 tablespoons Thai red curry paste  
 3 pounds kabocha, kuri or buttercup squash—peeled, seeded and cut into 2-inch pieces  
 5 cups water  
 Two 13 1/2-ounce cans unsweetened coconut milk  
 2 lime leaves or 1 teaspoon lime zest  
 1 large stalk of fresh lemongrass, smashed and cut into 2-inch lengths  
 2 tablespoons sugar  
 2 tablespoons fresh lime juice  
 Salt  
 1/4 cup vegetable oil  
 2 large scallions, thinly sliced

In a large, heavy pot, melt the butter. Add the onion and sliced ginger and cook over moderate heat, stirring occasionally, until the onion is softened, 7 minutes.

Add the curry paste and cook, stirring, until fragrant, 2 minutes. Add the squash and water and bring to a boil. Cover partially and simmer over low heat until soft, 25 minutes. Add the coconut milk, lime leaves and lemongrass, cover partially and simmer for 30 minutes longer. Discard the lime leaves and lemongrass.

Working in batches, puree the soup in a blender; add it to a clean pot. Stir in the sugar and lime juice and season with salt.

In a medium skillet, heat the oil until shimmering. Add the slivered ginger and cook over moderate heat, stirring, until golden brown and crisp, 5 minutes. Transfer the ginger to paper towels to drain.

Reheat the soup; ladle it into bowls. Garnish with the fried ginger and scallions and serve.

## Thai Chicken, Zucchini and Tomato Curry

3 tablespoons vegetable oil  
4 pounds skinless, boneless  
chicken breasts, sliced crosswise  
1/3 inch thick

Salt and freshly ground pepper  
3 onion, sliced 1/4 inch thick  
6 zucchini (1 pound), cut into 2-  
by-1/2-inch sticks  
4 cups cherry tomatoes  
1 tablespoon Thai red curry  
paste

1 1/2 cup unsweetened coconut  
milk  
6 tablespoons water  
Finely grated zest of 1 lime  
3 tablespoon fresh lime juice  
1 cup chopped cilantro

In a large skillet, heat 2  
tablespoons of the oil. Add the  
chicken, season with salt and  
pepper and cook over high heat  
until just white throughout, 2  
minutes. Transfer the chicken  
to a plate.

Add the remaining oil to the  
skillet. Add the onion and stir-  
fry over moderately high heat  
for 2 minutes. Add the zucchini  
and cherry tomatoes and stir-  
fry for 2 minutes.

Stir in the curry paste, coconut  
milk, water, lime zest and lime  
juice and bring to a simmer.  
Add the chicken and stir for 20  
seconds. Stir in the cilantro.  
Transfer to bowls and serve  
with rice.

## Turmeric Roasted Cauliflower

1 teaspoon coriander seeds  
1/2 teaspoon white  
peppercorns  
1/4 cup extra-virgin olive oil  
1 tablespoon minced garlic  
2 teaspoons ground turmeric  
1/2 teaspoon crushed red  
pepper  
One 3-pound head of  
cauliflower, cored and  
separated into 1-inch florets  
Salt  
1 medium shallot, thinly sliced  
and separated into rings  
4 kumquats, seeded and  
chopped  
1/4 cup chopped cilantro

Preheat the oven to 400°. In a small skillet, toast the coriander seeds and peppercorns over moderately high heat until fragrant, about 30 seconds.

Transfer to a spice grinder and let cool completely. Grind the spices to a powder and transfer to a small bowl. Stir in the olive oil, garlic, turmeric and crushed red pepper.

On a large rimmed baking sheet, drizzle the cauliflower with the olive oil mixture and toss to coat. Season with salt and roast for 25 minutes, until the cauliflower is tender; scrape the cauliflower into a serving bowl. Add the shallot rings, kumquats and cilantro and toss well. Serve hot or warm.

## Fried Bananas

2 cup flour  
1 tsp baking soda  
pinch salt  
4 tbsp sugar  
2 eggs  
12 Tbl water  
4 Tbl shredded coconut  
8 firm bananas  
Vegetable oil  
Honey

Sift the flour, baking soda in a bowl. Stir in the sugar and the egg, and whisk in the water just enough to make a thin batter

Whisk in the shredded coconut into the batter

Peel the bananas. Cut each one in half lengthways, then in half crossways to make 32 pieces about the same size. Wait until ready to cook so they do not discolor.

Heat the oil to 375 and dip the banana pieces in the batter, then slide into the oil and cook until golden brown. Drain on paper towel

Cook the remaining pieces. Serve immediately with honey