

COOKING AT REN

March 16, 2012

Crispy Thai Shrimp Cakes **With Asian Mango Salad**

1 lb medium shrimp, shells
and tail removed
1/4 lb long beans or green
beans, thinly sliced
1/4 cup unsweetened coconut
milk
2 Tbl cilantro
1 lemongrass stalk, tender
white inner bulb minced
1 red Thai chile chopped
1 Tbl Asian fish sauce
1 tea salt
2 Tbl vegetable oil

In a saucepan of boiling
water, cook the beans until
bright green, about 2 mins.
Drain and pat dry with towel

In food processor, combine the
shrimp with the coconut milk,
cilantro, lemongrass, chile, fish
sauce and salt. Pulse to a
chunky consistency. Scrape
the mixture into a bowl and
stir in the green beans. Form
into sixteen 1/4 cup patties

In a large nonstick skillet, heat
the oil. Add the shrimp cakes
and cook over moderately
high heat until browned on
the bottom, about 2 mins.
Flip and cook over moderate
heat until the cakes are
browned on the other side and
just cooked through about 3
mins.

Mango Salad

1 Mango, peeled and small
dice
1 small shallot, peeled and
small dice
1 Asian pear peeled and small
dice
3 Tbl cilantro minced
juice from 1 lime
mashed garlic

Combine all the ingredients in
a bowl and toss. Add salt if
needed

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 shallots
 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
 4 zucchini (2 pound), cut into 2-by-1/2-inch sticks
 4 cups cherry tomatoes cut in half
 3 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.

Jasmine Rice

4 1/2 cups water
1 tea salt
1 tea lime zest
3 cups jasmine rice

In a saucepan, combine the water, and salt. Add the rice and bring to a boil. Cover and simmer over low heat for 12 mins. Keeping the pan covered, turn off the heat and let the rice stand for 5 mins.

Uncover and fluff the rice and the lime zest and serve

Sautéed Bananas in Sweet Coconut Cream

8 Bananas
 4 Tbl Butter
 2 cup unsweetened coconut milk
 4 - 5 Tbl Sugar
 Lime juice to taste
 pinch of salt
 4 Tbl brown sugar

Add the coconut milk and 4 Tbl sugar to a sauce pan bring to a boil. Boil until reduced by half about 5 mins

When as thick as heavy cream, it is done. Add a squeeze of lime and a pinch of salt. Taste the cream should be rich and creamy with a hint of citrus. If it needs more sweetness, add another spoonful of sugar, and if a little more citrus add more lime juice.

Peel the bananas. Cut each one in half lengthways, then in half crossways to make 32 pieces. Heat the butter in a heavy fry pan. When the butter is hot, add the bananas and cook for about a minute per side. Should be a little golden brown. When they are done, sprinkle on the brown sugar, give a quick stir.

Pool the sauce on the bottom of the bowls and place 2 pieces of banana in each bowl