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A LEAF OUT OF MUM'S BOOK

DELICIOUS DISH EASY TO MAKE



Frances Sacco

BRING the taste of Laos into your kitchen with this delicious chicken curry steamed in banana leaves.

Souphanith Thoumsavanh loves to make it for her family and happily shares it with her teachers and fellow students at Navitas English College Cabramatta.

"It's special, but it's not hard to make," the 26-year-old said.

"I like to cook it for my family and friends."

This fragrant dish gains its flavour from fresh coriander and fish sauce, while the chilli provides a subtle undertone.

The soft texture of the sticky rice combines well with the chicken and is nicely balanced with some crisp raw vegetables served on the side.

"Sometimes I make it with fish instead of chicken," Mrs Thoumsavanh said.

"I learned this from my mother when I was about 16 years old."

Including preparation time, the dish takes about 45 minutes to make.

The soy sauce, fish sauce and chilli can all be adjusted to taste.

Most of the ingredients are easily sourced at supermarkets, while banana leaves can be bought fresh or frozen from Asian grocery stores.

Sticky rice, which is very popular in Southeast Asia, is a staple food.

lar in her native Laos, is one of Mrs Thoumsavanh's favourite ingredients.

"I make it for my husband and myself," Mrs Thoumsavanh said.

Since moving to Cabramatta two years ago, she has branched out and begun experimenting with different cuisines.

"I've learned to make spaghetti and salads," she said.

"I also like to make momo soup."

Momos are dumplings originally from Nepal or Tibet.

They are similar to Chinese dumplings and are stuffed with a variety of ingredients.

"I also cook a lot of fish," she said.

CHICKEN CURRY STEAMED IN BANANA LEAVES

Ingredients

- 4 chicken breast or thigh fillets
- 1 cup of sticky rice
- salt to taste
- 1 tsp fish sauce
- 2 tbsp soy sauce
- 2 hard boiled eggs
- 1 spanish onion
- One handful of coriander leaves
- Fresh chilli to taste
- 4-5 banana leaves depending on size

Method

Cut the chicken into small pieces, cook until browned.

Add the soy sauce, fish sauce, salt and

chilli and cook the chicken through.

Steam the rice in a pot of boiling water until tender.

Finely chop the spanish onion and mix it with the chicken, cooked rice and coriander.

Chop up the eggs and add them to the mixture.

Divide the mixture and wrap it in the banana leaves.

Steam the parcels for 30 minutes.

Serve immediately.





Souphanith Thomsavanh enjoys making chicken curry in banana leaves. .

Picture: JESS HUSBAND