

A recipe from

DAD'S CHILE COOKBOOK



Heat Rating:



Kelantanese Barbequed Chicken

I had chicken like this from a roadside vendor in Malaysia, and he wanted to practice his English on me; so I got his recipe in return...

1½ tsp red pepper flakes

1 tsp turmeric powder

1 Tbsp sugar

½ tsp salt

1 young chicken, quartered

8-10 dried chiles

1½ oz hazelnuts, chopped

1 inch ginger, peeled, sliced

3 fresh red Thai chiles, sliced

1½ Tbsp minced garlic

5 shallots, peeled, chopped

4 Tbsp vegetable oil

4 stalks lemongrass, bottom ⅓ only

2 tsp tamarind pulp

1 cup water

1 cup thick coconut milk

½ tsp sugar

1 tsp salt

Grind the pepper flakes in a spice mill until fine; add next three ingredients. Rub on chicken to coat, then set aside to rest for 1 hour. (Can be refrigerated overnight.)

Meanwhile, cut the dried chiles into strips and soak for 15 minutes in hot water. Drain and place in a blender. Grind with the next five ingredients (down through shallots) to make a sambal (spice paste). Add oil sparingly to keep blender from binding.

Prepare lemongrass by peeling off the outer layers and bruising the stalks. Heat oil in a wok or large skillet and stir-fry the sambal over medium heat until very fragrant, about 5 minutes. Add tamarind pulp and lemongrass and stir-fry for 3-4 minutes. Add water to deglaze, and cook for 2-3 minutes, stirring often. Add chicken, coconut milk sugar and salt. Reduce heat and simmer for 25-30 minutes, until chicken is tender. Remove chicken to a plate and reserve sauce.

Grill the chicken over a low charcoal fire (or on a gas grill, if you have to, but charcoal adds more flavor), basting frequently with the sauce. Cook for 7-10 minutes on each side. Serve hot, topped with remaining sauce, on a bet of fragrant, fluffy rice.

Yield: Four servings

Preparation time: 20 minutes, plus an hour marinating

Cooking time: 40 minutes, plus 20 minutes grilling

