

A recipe from

DAD'S CHILE COOKBOOK



Heat Rating:



Skate Grilled in Banana Leaves

Similar to Recipe in "Planet Barbeque" by Steven Raichlen

Singapore hawker food is a traveler's delight. The fish is always fresh and excellent, and uniquely packaged and prepared...

*1 large piece (4-5 inches) fresh ginger
2-3 Tbsp coarsely chopped macadamias
4-5 shallots, coarsely chopped
4 stalks lemongrass, trimmed, bruised,
chopped
4 cloves garlic, chopped (2 Tbsp minced)
4 hot chiles (Thai, Serrano), chopped
1 tsp Kashmiri chile powder (or similar)
2 tsp turmeric powder*

*½ tsp kosher salt
1 tsp freshly ground black pepper
2 Tbsp light soy sauce
4-5 Tbsp light olive oil (or vegetable)
1 tsp shrimp paste (optional)
4 boneless, skinless skate wings (6 oz ea.)
kosher salt
4 pieces banana leaf, trimmed into 10 inch x
12 inch sheets*

Peel and coarsely chop the ginger. Mix macadamias, ginger, shallots, lemongrass, garlic, chiles, spice powders, salt and pepper in a small food processor. Pulse-process until a fairly uniform paste appears. Work the soy sauce into the paste; set aside.

Heat oil in a wok or high-sided skillet over medium-high heat. Add shrimp paste and cook for a minute. Turn heat to high and add the spice paste. Cook, with vigorous stirring, until dark and highly fragrant, about 4-5 minutes. Transfer to a bowl and let stand until cooled to room temperature. Season the fish, then use a spoon to thickly coat each piece of fish on both sides.

Place a banana leaf sheet, dark side down, on a clean, dry work surface. Put a piece of fish in the center of the leaf. Fold one long end over, then fold the second long end over. Fold the remaining edges in and pin with toothpicks. The final packet should be about 4 inches by 6 inches in size. Fish packets can be prepared in advance and chilled.

Set grill for high, direct heat. Brush and oil the grate. Arrange fish packages, seams down, on the grate. Grill until the leaf is browned and the fish is cooked through, about 4 minutes per side. Serve in the leaf, with plenty of napkins handy.

Yield: Four servings

Preparation time: 30 minutes, plus spice paste cooling

Cooking time: 10 minutes, plus grill setup

