

Virtual Excursion to Thailand



VIRTUAL EXCURSIONS

FOOD • DRINK • FUN

A LITTLE HELP



Traditional Thai cuisine falls generally into four categories:

- Tom (boiled)
- Yam (salads)
- Tam (pounded)
- Kaeng (curries). Deep-frying, stir-frying and steaming are methods introduced from Chinese cuisine.

The cuisines of Thailand's neighbors, especially India, Cambodia, Malaysia and Indonesia, have mutually influenced one another over the last 600 years.



In addition, Western influences, starting in 1511 with the initial mission from the Portuguese have also influenced Thai cuisine resulting in dishes such as foi thong, the Thai adaptation of the Portuguese fios de ovos, and sangkhaya, where coconut milk replaces cow's milk.

The most notable influence from the West was the introduction of the chili pepper from the Americas in probably the late 1500's. It, and rice are now two of the most important ingredients in Thai cuisine.



There are **essentially five regional Thai core cuisines** generally corresponding with the five regions of Thailand:

1. Bangkok: Cuisine of the Bangkok metropolitan area with Portuguese influences. Bangkok cuisine is sometimes referred to as royal cuisine. Thai royal cuisine focuses on the freshness of seasonal products. Tastes and appearance of the food in Bangkok has changed over time as they have been influenced by other cuisines such as Asian, European countries.



2. Central Thai: Cuisine of the flat and wet central rice-growing plains. Coconut milk is one of major ingredients used in Central Thai cuisine.
3. Isan or northeastern Thai: Strongly influenced by the culture of Laos and also Khmer cuisine.



4. Northern Thai: Cuisine of the cooler valleys and forested mountains of the Thai highlands, once the majority of northern Thailand. This cuisine shares many ingredients with Isan.

5. Southern Thai: Cuisine of the Kra Isthmus which is bordered on two sides by tropical seas, with its many islands. The complex curries, food preparation techniques and usage of chilies and spices in Southern Thai cuisine form a great influence on the whole cuisine in general.



Our Food Choices for the Evening:



Thai Cashew Chicken



Tom Yum Goong



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Thai Cashew Chicken | Ingredients:

- Dried Thai chilies
- Garlic
- Toasted sesame oil
- Sweet onion
- Fish sauce
- Oyster sauce
- A mix of green, red and yellow bell peppers diced
- Boneless and skinned chicken thighs
- Extra-roasted cashews
- Green onions
- Sugar
- Soy sauce
- Thai chili paste



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Thai Cashew Chicken | Cooking steps:

1. Marinade chicken in soy sauce/Kung Pao sauce.
2. Combine soy, fish and oyster sauce together and whisk
3. Heat oil in a wok until very hot and spread the chicken in one layer and allow to sear.
4. Once browned, toss the chicken until fully cooked. Remove from the pan.
5. In the same wok, add the garlic and cook till golden.
6. Add the onions and cook briefly.
7. Add bell peppers, chicken, and the sauce mixture.
8. Toss on high heat for about a minute until everything is well combined.
9. Turn off the heat, then toss in the cashews and green onions.

Enjoy with some jasmine rice!



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Tom Yum Goong | Ingredients :

- Medium to large shrimp, head-on, shell-on.
- Fresh Makrut lime leaves (kaffir lime leaves). If fresh aren't available, look for frozen or dried. But then use twice as much.
- Fresh Lemongrass. Fresh is best as it is the main flavor of the soup, but whole frozen lemongrass is fine. Do not use dried or chopped.
- Fresh Galangal. Frozen or dried will work as a substitute.
- Thai chilies, amount is to taste.
- Sweet/Savory Thai chili paste.
- Fresh lime juice. It must be fresh – do not use bottled lime juice.
- Fish sauce. Use good quality fish sauce as it is the main seasoning.
- Cane sugar
- Oyster mushrooms, or another type of Asian mushrooms such as shimeji, enoki or fresh shiitake.
- Cilantro and green onion for garnish.



Cooking steps:

1. Make the shrimp stock by sauteing shrimp shells and/or heads until the bottom of the pot starts collecting browned bits.
 2. Deglaze with water and scrape all the stuck bits from the bottom of the pot.
 3. If using shrimp heads, use tongs to squeeze out the tasty tomalley inside.
 4. Simmer for about 45 minutes. You can add some chopped onions to the simmering stock right now if you want some added flavor.
 5. Strain the stock and add galangel, lemongrass, makrut and Thai chili's.
 6. Simmer for 5 minutes.
 7. Add the mushrooms and cook for 1-2 minutes.
 8. Add the shrimp, bring the stock back to a simmer and then turn off the heat.
 9. Allow the residual heat of the soup to fully cook the shrimp for 2 minutes.
 10. Add the Thai chili paste and fish sauce and stir to dissolve the chili paste.
 11. Add lime juice and then taste and adjust, adding the sugar only if needed.
- It's ready to serve!





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Our drink for the evening

THAI LEMONGRASS MARGARITA | Ingredients:

For the rim:

2 tablespoon kosher salt 1½ teaspoon curry powder

Lime wedges

For the margarita:

½ ounce agave nectar

2 tablespoons chopped lemongrass

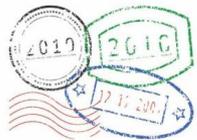
2 tablespoons chopped ginger

1 sprig cilantro or Thai basil (regular sweet basil also works)

3 ounces lime juice

3 ounces tequila blanco

½ ounce orange liqueur



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Our drink for the evening

THAI LEMONGRASS MARGARITA | Preparation :

For the rim:

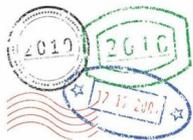
Combine salt and curry powder in a shallow dish. Cut a small slice horizontally through flesh of lime wedge then run around rim of a rocks glass; lightly dip rim in salt mixture then fill with ice.

For the margarita:

Muddle agave, ginger, lemongrass and cilantro in a shaker until thoroughly smashed, about 1 minute.

Fill shaker halfway with ice, add lime juice, tequila, and liqueur secure lid and shake vigorously until thoroughly chilled.

Strain margarita into prepared glasses, top with a splash of club soda and garnish with lime wedges, lemongrass and cilantro or Thai basil (*optional*).



Our drink for the evening

LEMONGRASS, LIME, & THAI BASIL MOJITO | Ingredients:

2 stalks lemongrass

1/4 cup + 2 teaspoons sugar

2 limes, sliced into 8 wedges

Large handful fresh Thai basil (also called pepper basil)

8 ounces white rum

Club soda, as required to top up

Ice, to serve

Lemongrass stalks, trimmed (optional, to use as stir sticks)





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LEMONGRASS, LIME, & THAI BASIL MOJITO | Preparation:

1. First, make the lemongrass simple syrup. Chop the lemongrass stalks into 1-inch pieces, and bruise using a mortar and pestle. Place them in a pot with 1 cup of water and 1/4 cup sugar. Bring to a boil, then reduce the heat and simmer for 2 minutes. Turn off the heat and let the syrup infuse for about 2 hours or allow to cool and refrigerate for 24 hours.
2. Strain the syrup, pressing down on the lemongrass stalks to extract maximum flavor. Chill until ready to use. Once the syrup is strained, it will also keep in your fridge for a couple of weeks.
3. To build each cocktail, arrange 4 cocktail glasses on a work surface and place 1/2 teaspoon sugar in each glass. Add 1 lime slice into each glass along with a handful of Thai basil, and muddle together.
4. Pour in 2 ounces rum and 2 ounces lemongrass syrup. Top with ice and club soda. Stir and serve.



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Our drink for the evening

THAI INSPIRED VODKA COCKTAIL | Ingredients:

Vodka: Use your favorite!

Simple syrup: It's just sugar and water. Use a different sweetener if you prefer or granulated sugar - but sugar will make the drink grainy

Thai basil leaves: Thai basil has a purple stem, long, narrow and study leaves and gives a more anise (licorice) flavor than more common Italian sweet basil.

Mint leaves: I love mint leaves in cocktails for their delicate flavor. Smack them between your hands or muddle them in your glass to release their full flavor.

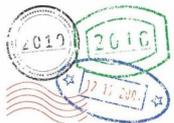
Kaffir lime leaf: lime leaves are large very sturdy almost waxy leaves with an intense citrus flavor and perfume.

Red Thai chili: you could use a green one also or skip it. Gives some color and is a pretty garnish, in my opinion.

Lime juice: I prefer fresh lime juice, but you can use bottled if you have it.

Tonic water: tonic water or sparkling water will both work for this cocktail.

How to make Simply Syrup: Heat together equal parts of sugar and water, stirring, just until the sugar dissolves. This allows for a smoother drink with no sugar granules.



A LITTLE HELP

Virtual Excursions 2023!

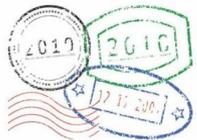
Join A Little Help's Rick Smith, his mom Marilyn and daughter Maria as they take us on a virtual excursions around the globe and treat us to food and drink recipes that are indicative of the region.

Wednesday, April 26th – Poland

Wednesday, August 23rd – Germany

Wednesday, June 28th – Morocco

Wednesday, October 25th – Macau

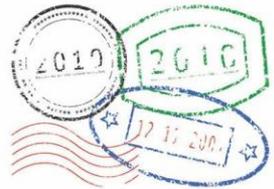


Join our Little Talks in 2023

Little Talks - Save the Dates 4th Wednesday of Every Month

- **March** Spring Cleaning – Declutter, Safety in the Home and Online
- **May** The Great Outdoors – Lawn and Garden, Landscaping
- **July** Physical Health Day – Exercise, nutrition
- **September** Brain Health – Dementia and Alzheimer's

Our Excursion to the Thailand will begin at 4:30pm



See you in our next
adventure to Poland...
coming soon.



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adventure... coming soon.