

A still life composition of various Asian ingredients. In the top left, there are green leaves and a dark stone mortar and pestle containing small brown seeds. To the right, a dark bowl holds several bright green limes. In the bottom left, a woven basket is filled with long green beans, several heads of garlic, and small purple shallots. In the bottom right, a dark plate holds several vibrant red chili peppers. The background is a textured, warm-toned surface.

DESTINATION ASIA

11 FLAVOURS OF ASIA RECIPE BOOK

RECIPES

Welcome to our 11 flavours of Asia recipe book! Our country teams have each shared a favourite recipe from their destination. Some are national dishes, others less known outside of the borders, but each represents the essence of their beloved country in Asia.

Most ingredients can be sourced in local supermarkets while a few will require an Asian food store. Enjoy finding the ingredients and don't be afraid to try out substitutes if you can't get exactly what you need. We hope you love testing out your culinary skills and sharing some of these wonderful dishes with friends and family.

Starters

✓ Rasam (Malaysia)

A heart-warming soup made using a blend of spices to create a delicious sour, peppery and chili flavour.

✓ Green Tomato Salad (Myanmar)

A fresh and light salad found across Myanmar that makes a delicious snack any time of the day.

Char-grilled Beef in Betel Leaf with Lemongrass (Vietnam)

Fragrantly seasoned grilled rolls of beef that not only look great, but taste sensational.

Main Courses

Mapo Tofu (China)

A healthy dish that packs a punch with its spicy Sichuan influences.

Spicy Tamarind Fish (Indonesia)

A wonderfully fragrant spicy and sour fish stew that can be enjoyed at lunch or dinner time.

Herbal Soup with Vegetables & Fish (Cambodia)

A simply delicious herbal soup packed full of revitalizing goodness that makes an excellent light meal.

Hainanese Chicken Rice (Singapore)

A simple meal that is packed full of flavor and never fails to leave you feeling content and full.

Minced Meat Salad (Laos)

Nothing comes close to the myriad flavours produced by this dish that perfectly represents Laos.

Desserts

✓ Banana in Coconut Milk (Thailand)

A sweet dish combining smooth texture with scrumptious flavours that can be enjoyed hot or cold.

Red Bean Cakes (Japan)

A classic Japanese confection to be enjoyed any time of the day, by kids and parents alike.

✓ Chinese Almond Tea (Hong Kong)

A slightly sweet tasting tea that helps promote good health.

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Rasam

Rasam is a heart-warming soup from Southern India that is regularly eaten in Malaysia as a starter. It is made using a blend of spices to create a distinct sour, peppery and chilly taste. Rasam is said to be an excellent recovery food that is full of vitamins and nutrients.

Preparation time 5 Minutes

Cooking time 15 Minutes

Serves 2-3 People

Ingredients

- Tamarind (small gooseberry size)
- 1.5 tsp Rasam powder
- ¼ tsp sugar
- 1 tbsp chopped coriander leaves
- 1 tomato
- Pinch of turmeric powder
- Salt (as required)
- 5 curry leaves

To temper

- 1 tbsp of ghee vegetable Oil
- 2 dried chili
- 4 curry leaves
- 1 tbsp mustard
- 1 tsp cumin

Steps

1. Soak the tamarind in hot water for 30 mins then pour through a sieve and keep 3 cups (add extra water if required). Chop the tomatoes into 4 halves.
2. Heat a saucepan and cook the 'To temper' ingredients for 1-2 minutes – adding in order shown.
3. Add the tomatoes and cook until soft.
4. Then add the tamarind extract (3 cups), Rasam powder, turmeric powder, torn curry leaves and half the coriander leaves.
5. Bring to the boil, then add salt and sugar for taste.
6. Switch off the flame and transfer to a serving bowl. Garnish with remaining coriander leaves. Serve with rice.

Notes / Tips

1. You can add two crushed garlic in their skin before switching off the flame to add extra flavour.
2. Do not boil for a long period of time as this will reduce the flavours.
3. Adding sugar helps enhance the flavour and turns the liquid clear.



A recipe from Destination Asia Malaysia

 suitable for vegans

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Green Tomato Salad (Khayan Chin Thi Thoke)

Green Tomato Salad is an extremely popular starter in Myanmar. On the famous Inle Lake, farmers maintain an old tradition: floating agriculture - also called ye-chan, with its main production being tomatoes. There are hundreds of hectares of small floating islands that produce enough tomatoes and other vegetables to support the region's economy. Local people eat tomato for good health as they are an excellent source of vitamins A, C, and potassium.

Preparation time 5 Minutes

Cooking time 2 Minutes

Serves 4 People

Ingredients

- 2 green tomatoes
- ¼ cup roasted unsalted peanuts (crushed)
- 2 onions
- 2 tbsp peanut oil
- 1 lime
- Salt
- Sugar & coriander leaves to taste

Steps

1. Cut the green tomatoes and onions into thin wedges and mix in a salad bowl.
2. Mix into the salad bowl, the peanut oil, 2 generous pinches of salt and sugar.
3. Squeeze half of the lime (a good 1 tablespoon) over the top. Use a large spoon or your hands to mix well.
4. Add coriander to garnish.

Notes / Tips

In place of green tomato; red tomato, cherry tomato, green bean, or carrot can be used.



A recipe from Destination Asia Myanmar

 suitable for vegans



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Char-grilled Beef in Betel Leaf with Lemongrass (Bò Cuốn Lá Lốt)

Fragrantly seasoned grilled rolls of beef wrapped up in wild betel leaf (lá lốt) are a favorite Vietnamese snack often served as an appetizer or entrée as part of a traditional lunch or dinner. The key to this dish is in the preparation and presentation. Once grilled and ready, the betel leaf beef rolls are placed on the table. Each guest then wraps the roll in rice paper along with a salad leaf for extra crunch, to eat as a "roll served in a roll".

Preparation time 45 Minutes **Cooking time** 3 - 5 Minutes **Serves** 3 - 4 People

Ingredients

Rolls

- 480g minced beef
- 4 betel leaves, chopped
- 1 tbsp chopped shallots
- 1 tbsp sugar
- 50g pork fat
- 18 betel leaves (for rolling)
- 1 tbsp chopped garlic
- 1 tsp salt
- 1tbsp vegetable oil
- 2 stems of lemongrass, finely chopped
- 1 tbsp soy sauce
- 4 wooden skewers

Sauce

- 2 tbsp water
- 2 tsp rice vinegar
- 2 tbsp sugar
- 1 tsp red chilli, deseeded and minced
- 2 tbsp lime juice
- 1 tsp chopped garlic

Accompaniments

- 12 lettuce leaves
- 6 rice papers
- 4 stems of Vietnamese basil leaves
- 20g roasted, chopped peanuts
- 200g fresh noodles

Steps

1. Prepare all the ingredients for the rolls as above. Mix all ingredients to form a smooth filling, then divide into 18 portions.
2. Lightly oil the outside face of the betel leaves, then place 1 betel leaf with the oiled side facing down and add 1 portion of filling.
3. Roll tightly then place on the skewer to close. Continue until all the filling has been used.
4. Grill beef rolls over a charcoal barbeque for 3 minutes.
5. In a bowl, add the lemon juice, water, rice vinegar, sugar and fish sauce. Whisk until the sugar is dissolved.
6. Add chopped chilli and chopped garlic and mix again. Add more fish sauce or chilli if desired.

Notes / Tips

1. To keep the rolls tender and the beef juicy, be careful not to overcook on the grill.
2. Betel leaves can be substituted with grape leaves.
3. To serve, place beef rolls on a serving platter and top with chopped peanuts.
4. Serve with a plate of lettuce leaves, Vietnamese basil leaves, fresh noodles, and rice papers, as well as the dipping sauce.

A recipe from Destination Asia Vietnam



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Mapo Tofu

Roughly translated to “pockmarked grandma’s tofu”, mapo tofu is a popular Chinese dish from Sichuan Province, where the signature spice of the region – the Sichuan peppercorn – gives dishes a unique “numbing” effect. Mapo tofu is eaten across the world and takes on many forms as restaurants put their own spin on it, often lessening spice levels and adding different vegetables.

Preparation time 5 Minutes

Cooking time 15 Minutes

Serves 3 people

Ingredients

- ½ cup oil
- 6-8 dried red chilies, roughly chopped
- 3 tbsp ginger, finely minced
- 250g minced pork
- ¾ cup chicken stock
- 1 ½ tsp cornstarch
- ¼ tsp sugar (optional)
- 1-2 fresh Sichuan red chili peppers, thinly sliced
- 1 ½ tbsp Sichuan peppercorns
- 3 tbsp garlic, finely minced
- 1-2 tbsp spicy bean sauce
- 450g silken tofu, cut into 1 inch cubes
- ¼ tsp sesame oil (optional)
- 1 scallion, finely chopped

Steps

Instructions

1. On a medium heat, toast the chilies. Add ¼ cup of the oil and throw in the fresh and dried peppers. Stir occasionally and heat until fragrant. Remove from heat and set aside.
2. Heat the remaining ¼ cup of oil in your wok over medium heat. Add the ground Sichuan peppercorns and stir occasionally for 30 seconds. Add the ginger. After 1 minute, add the garlic. Fry for another minute, and then turn up the heat to high and add the ground pork. Break up the meat and fry it until it's cooked through.
3. Add the spicy bean sauce and stir well. Then add ¾ cups of chicken broth to the wok and simmer.
4. In a small bowl, add a ¼ cup of water to the cornstarch and mix until thoroughly combined.
5. Add the cornstarch mixture to the sauce and stir. Let it bubble away until the sauce starts to thicken.
6. Stir in the chilli oil made earlier into the sauce and add the tofu. Use a spatula to gently toss the tofu in the sauce. Cook for 3-5 minutes. To finish, add the sesame oil, sugar, and scallions and stir until the scallions are wilted.

Notes / Tips

Ready-made Mapo Tofu sauce packages are available in most Asian supermarkets.

A recipe from Destination Asia China



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Spicy Tamarind Fish (Ikan Asam Pedas)

A signature dish from Kalimantan Barat (West Borneo), this spicy and sour fish stew is a popular lunch or dinner time meal. During durian season, durian paste is often added to the broth.

Preparation time 30 Minutes

Cooking time 40 Minutes

Serves 2 People

Ingredients

- 2 cups water
- 1 tbsp tamarind paste
- 2 tsp salt
- 1 tbsp chili paste (optional)
- 500g mackerel
- 1 tbsp oil
- 1 ripe pineapple

Spice paste:

- 2 cups water
- 1 stick of lemongrass
- 5cm fresh turmeric
- 1 tsp shrimp paste
- 4 cloves of garlic
- 1 large citrus leaf
- 13 spicy chilies

Steps

1. Clean the fish and cut into large chunks. In Indonesia, locals will also add the fish head to the stew (optional).
2. Blend the spices with 2 tbsp water and 2tbsp oil until they form a smooth paste.
3. In a large saucepan, heat 1 tbsp oil. Add the blended spices and dry for 3-4 minutes until aromatic.
4. Add the fish into the pan and mix well; ensuring the fish is covered by the spice paste.
5. Add the water and boil for 2 minutes. Add salt to taste.
6. Lastly, add the pineapple and simmer on a low heat for about 10 minutes.
7. Season as necessary. When the pineapple is tender, it is ready to be served.

Notes / Tips

1. Pineapple may be substituted with any other vegetable plus 2 tsp of palm sugar.
2. To make the dish vegetarian, simply substitute the fish with sweet potatoes, pumpkin, beans, mushrooms, or taro.

A recipe from Destination Asia Indonesia





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Herbal Soup with Vegetables & Fish (Samlor Proher Trey)

Often considered as one of Cambodia's national dishes, Samlor Proher Trey is a delicious traditional herbal soup made with fish and vegetables. It makes an excellent light meal or starter.

Preparation time 30 Minutes **Cooking time** 15 - 20 Minutes **Serves** 4 People

Ingredients

- 500g soft white fish
- 250g taro
- 250g winter melon
- 100g climbing wattle
- 20g garlic
- 10g ginger
- 2 tbsp sugar
- 1 tbsp chicken seasoning
- 250g pumpkin
- 250g mushrooms
- 100g luffa gourd (or bitter melon)
- 50g lemon grass cut into small pieces
- 10g kaffir leaves
- 10g galangal
- 1 tbsp fish sauce
- Salt (as required)

Steps

1. Grill the fish until cooked. Remove only the meat and keep to one side.
2. Blend the lemongrass, garlic, half of the kaffir leaves, finger root, and galangal together.
3. Cut the vegetables into smaller pieces.
4. Add 1 litre of water to a pot and bring to the boil. Add the fish, blended ingredients, and vegetables.
5. Add the sugar, fish sauce, salt, soup powder. Season to taste.
6. Cook until vegetables are soft.
7. Finish by adding the spiny amaranth and climbing wattle. Bring to the boil again, then serve with steamed white rice.

Notes / Tips

1. Serving the soup when it is hot brings more flavour.
2. There are two ways of serving the soup: serve as is with chunks of fish and vegetables, or blend the soup until smooth.
3. Add more green leaves to make it more nutritious and flavoursome.
4. Climbing wattle may be replaced by pumpkin leaves or any other fresh green leaves available in your country.

A recipe from Destination Asia Cambodia



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Hainanese Chicken Rice

The first chicken rice restaurants opened in Singapore during Japanese occupation in World War II, when the British were forced out and their Hainanese servants lost their source of income. Now, Hainanese chicken rice is considered one of Singapore's national dishes. It is eaten "everywhere, every day" in Singapore and is a ubiquitous sight in hawker centres across the country.

Preparation time

1 Hour

Cooking time

1 Hour 30 Minutes

Serves

6 People

Ingredients

Hainanese chicken

- 4 pieces of fresh ginger, peeled and cut into ¼-inch (6 mm) slices
- 1 whole chicken (giblets removed)
- 3 ½ litres cold water
- ¼ cup kosher salt
- 2 tbsp sesame oil
- 1 bunch of fresh scallions

Hainanese rice

- ¼ cup sesame oil
- 1 tbsp fresh ginger, minced
- 2 cups reserved chicken poaching broth
- 2 tbsp chicken fat, chopped
- 1 tsp kosher salt
- 2 cloves garlic, minced
- 2 cups long grain rice, rinsed and drained

Steps

1. To clean the chicken, rub all over with a handful of kosher salt, getting rid of any loose skin. Rinse the chicken well inside and out. Pat dry with paper towels.
2. Season the chicken generously with salt. Stuff the chicken with the ginger slices and scallions.
3. Place the chicken in a large stock pot, cover with cold water by 1 in (2 cm), and season with salt to taste.
4. Bring to a boil over high heat, then immediately reduce the heat to low to maintain a simmer. Cover and cook for about 30 minutes.
5. Remove the chicken from the pot, reserving the poaching liquid for later, and transfer to an ice bath for 5 minutes. Discard the ginger and green onion.
6. After it's cooled, pat the chicken dry with paper towels and rub all over with sesame oil.
7. In a large wok or skillet, heat ¼ cup of sesame oil over medium-high heat. Add 2 tbsp of reserved chopped chicken fat, garlic, ginger, and salt, and fry for about 10 minutes or until aromatic.
8. Reserve one quarter of the fried garlic mixture, then add the rice to the remaining fried garlic and stir to coat. Cook for 3 minutes.
9. Transfer the rice to a rice cooker and add 2 cups of reserved poaching broth. Steam the rice for 60 minutes, or until tender.
10. Serve the sliced chicken with the rice, dipping sauces, sliced cucumbers, and fresh cilantro.

Notes / Tips Best eaten with ginger garlic sauce and dark soy sauce.

A recipe from Destination Asia Singapore



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Minced Meat Salad (Laap)

Laap, sometimes spelled larb, is the national dish of Laos. This minced meat salad is either cooked or served raw and marinated in fish sauce, citrus and chili peppers. The meat base of laap can be pork, fish, beef or duck, while vegetarian laap contains tofu or mushrooms. It's served with toasted rice and eaten at room temperature with sticky rice or in a lettuce wrap.

Preparation time 15 Minutes

Cooking time 5 Minutes

Serves 1-2 People

Ingredients

- 5 oz (150g) minced pork, beef or chicken
- 1 tbsp roasted sticky rice powder
- 1 tbsp cilantro leaves and stems, chopped
- ½ cup mint, roughly chopped
- ¼ cup saw leaf coriander, chopped
- 1-2 chillies, chopped
- 1 tbsp lime juice
- ½ tsp salt
- 1 small handful finely sliced banana flower (optional)
- dash of stock powder (optional)
- 1 clove garlic, minced
- 2-3 small green onions, finely chopped
- 1 stalk lemongrass, finely sliced
- 2 long beans, finely sliced
- 1 tbsp fresh galangal, minced
- 1 tsp fish sauce
- 1 tsp dried chili powder
- small handful of bean sprouts

Steps

1. Cook and stir the chosen meat, breaking it into little pieces for about 5 minutes.
2. Stir in the roasted rice powder, garlic and onions.
3. Continue to cook for another minute and break up the meat until browned. Then add add cilantro, mint, galangal, lemon grass, fish sauce, and chillies.
4. Stir for another couple of minutes.
5. Turn off the heat and throw in the lime juice and salt (add to taste).
6. Serve with a garnish of saw leaf coriander (if unavailable, normal coriander will do).

Notes / Tips

After sampling, add more fish sauce / lime / salt or even sugar to achieve the perfect taste.

A recipe from Destination Asia Laos



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Banana in Coconut Milk (Kluay Bod Chi)

Known locally as kluay bod chi, this widely popular dessert comprises of bananas cooked in a mixture of coconut milk and coconut cream. Served throughout Thailand, this dish can be enjoyed either hot or cold.

Preparation time 5 Minutes

Cooking time 15 Minutes

Serves 4 People

Ingredients

- 5 slightly green bananas
- 1 cup sugar
- 4 cups coconut milk
- ¼ tsp salt

Steps


1. Peel the bananas, then slice lengthways and cut in half.
2. Pour the coconut milk into a pot. Heat until it comes to a gentle boil.
3. Add the sugar and salt to the boiled coconut milk. Stir until completely dissolved.
4. Put the prepared bananas into the pot and continue to boil for 1 minute. Serve it hot, warm or cold.

Notes / Tips

1. The bananas should be still be slightly green so that they won't be too soft after cooked.
2. Reduce the amount of sugar to make it less sweet.
3. If you can't find fresh coconut milk, canned or powdered coconut milk is also readily available in Asian supermarkets.



A recipe from Destination Asia Thailand

 suitable for vegans

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Red Bean Pancakes (Dorayaki)

A classic Japanese confection, Dorayaki is a honey pancake sandwich with sweet red bean filling. It's wildly popular amongst both children and adults alike in Japan; even the beloved cartoon character Doraemon is crazy about them!

Preparation time 15 Minutes **Cooking time** 15 - 30 Minutes **Serves** 6 Dorayaki

Ingredients

- 4 large eggs
- 140g sugar
- 2 tbsp honey
- 160g plain flour
- 1 tsp baking powder
- 1-2 tbsp water
- 1 tsp vegetable oil
- 520g red bean paste (canned anko)

Steps

1. In a large bowl, combine the eggs, sugar, and honey and whisk well until the mixture becomes fluffy.
2. Sift the flour and baking powder into a bowl and mix all together. Keep in the fridge to rest for 15 minutes.
3. Stir in 1 tbsp of water. If required, add in an additional 1 tbsp of water.
4. Heat a large non-stick frying pan over a medium-low heat. Dip a paper towel in vegetable oil and lightly coat the bottom of the pan. With a ladle or small measuring cup pour 3 tbsp of the batter from 3 ins (8 cm) above the pan to create 3 in (8 cm) diameter pancakes.
5. When bubbles start to appear, flip over and cook the other side. Transfer to a plate and cover up with a damp towel to prevent from drying. Continue cooking the remainder of the batter.
6. To make the sandwich, place red bean paste in the centre of the pancake. Wrap dorayaki with plastic wrap until ready to serve.

Notes / Tips

1. If you do not have a kitchen scale, be sure to sift the flour, scoop into a measuring cup, and level off with a knife. If done correctly, 160g should be 1⅓ cup.
2. For the red bean paste, use canned Ogura-An.
3. Custard cream or chocolate cream may be used instead of red bean paste
4. If not eaten on the same or following day, wrap the dorayaki in plastic wrap and put in a Ziploc bag in the freezer. These will last for up to a month.

A recipe from Destination Asia Japan



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Chinese Almond Tea

Served as a dessert or sweet drink after a large dinner or banquet, Chinese almond tea is said to promote good health as well as glowing, supple skin.

Preparation time 3-4 Hours

Cooking time 20 Minutes

Serves 2-3 People

Ingredients

- 100g Chinese sweet almonds (apricot kernels also known as south almonds)
- 40g glutinous rice
- 140g sugar
- 30g rock sugar
- 3 cups water

Steps

1. To skin the almonds, blanch them in boiling water for about a minute and then drain in a colander. Rub off the skins with a towel.
2. Wash the glutinous rice and soak in water for 3-4 hours, or according to instructions. While doing this, wash and soak the skinned almonds for 1-2 hours. Drain and discard the water.
3. In a food processor, pulse the rice and almonds until finely ground. Line a colander with muslin or a fine clean cloth and place over a bowl to catch the liquid. Strain as much liquid from the pulp as possible.
4. Pour the liquid into a pot, filling it only halfway. Cook over a medium-low heat until it starts to boil, stirring occasionally. Add more water for a thinner consistency if desired. Add sugar to taste and simmer until dissolved.

Notes / Tips

Best served hot and enjoyed during dry winter months.



A recipe from Destination Asia Hong Kong

 suitable for vegans



THAILAND | VIETNAM | CHINA | JAPAN | HONG KONG | INDONESIA | SINGAPORE | CAMBODIA | MALAYSIA | MYANMAR | LAOS