

Thai Masman Curry

Masman curry is Muslim in origin. It is most commonly made with beef, but can also be made with duck, chicken, or tofu. It has less heat, but is more aromatic than red or green curries. The roasted peanuts add a wonderful flavour and crunch to the finished dish.

1 cup rice (*jasmine rice is the most traditional, but basmati will work OK too*)

potato/kumara (*one large or two small*)

1 carrot (*or any other vegetables you want to add*)

1 tablespoon masman curry paste

one tin coconut milk

2 tablespoon palm sugar

2 tablespoons fish sauce

2 star anise

2 cinnamon sticks

Some meat (*if you wish*)

small can of pineapple (*drained*)

peanuts roasted and chopped to garnish

Cook the rice:

1. Heat a little oil in a pot. Add the rice and stir about for just a couple of minutes to neutralise the excess starch. The rice should not be allowed to brown. Add a cup of water and cover.
4. Let it boil without stirring until you can see holes on the surface and the water is below the level of the rice.
5. Turn off the element, clamp the lid on the pot and leave it alone for seven minutes. It should be cooked perfectly!

Creating your masman curry:

1. Slice your vegetables thinly. If you are using carrots after peeling, slice on an angle and thinly so you get flat ovals of carrot.
2. Chop the potato into chunks.
3. Shake your can of coconut milk to make sure it is well mixed.
4. Smash up the palm sugar using a rolling pin.
5. Take your meat and lay it out on the chopping board. You want to slice it thinly on a slight angle and across the grain so it cooks quickly and is tender when you bite it. You don't want to chop it into squares - this is not a casserole!
6. Heat the oil in a wok or large saucepan. Add the curry paste and stir so it doesn't stick. When it become fragrant and starts to tickle your nose, add half the can of coconut milk. Stir until mixed.
7. Add the fish sauce, palm sugar and torn kaffir lime leaves and the spices. You are trying to balance the salty, sweet and spicy flavours. Add more fish sauce to boost the salt, and more palm sugar to boost the sweet. Some more curry paste can be added if the spiciness is getting lost.
8. Add the vegies and let them simmer until just about cooked.
9. Add the meat, pineapple and the rest of the coconut milk. The meat will cook quite quickly!
10. You can dish your rice and have the curry in a separate bowl or serve the two together. Sprinkle the peanuts over the top of the curry and enjoy!