



THE WAY THE COOKIE CRUMBLES

A FOOD BLOG

Thai-Style Chicken Soup (from Cooks Illustrated)

6-8 as an appetizer, 4 as a main course

I like to skip the serrano chile garnish (and a rarely bother with the scallion and lime garnishes) and add just one chile to the vegetables in step 1. It makes the soup a bit spicy.

This is great as a first course with pad Thai served afterward, or as a simple main dish served over rice.

Cooks Illustrated recommends Chaokoh coconut milk, which is what I've always used. For a lighter option, they like A Taste of Thai's Lite Coconut Milk, but I've never been able to find it.

1 teaspoon vegetable oil
3 stalks lemon grass, tough outer leaves removed, bottom 5 inches halved lengthwise and sliced thin crosswise
3 large shallots, chopped
8 sprigs fresh cilantro leaves, chopped coarse
3 tablespoons fish sauce
4 cups low-sodium chicken broth
2 (14-ounce) cans coconut milk, well-shaken
1 tablespoon sugar
½ pound white mushrooms, cleaned, stems trimmed, cut into ¼-inch slices
1 pound boneless, skinless chicken breasts, halved lengthwise and sliced on bias into ½-inch-thick pieces
3 tablespoons fresh lime juice from 2 to 3 limes
2 teaspoons red curry paste (Thai)

Garnish:

½ cup fresh cilantro leaves
2 serrano chiles, sliced thin
2 scallions, sliced thin on bias
1 lime, cut into wedges

1. Heat the oil in a large saucepan over medium heat until just shimmering. Add the lemon grass, shallots, cilantro, and 1 tablespoon fish sauce; cook, stirring frequently, until the vegetables are just softened, 2 to 5 minutes (vegetables should not brown). Stir in the chicken broth and 1 can of the coconut milk; bring to a simmer over high heat. Cover, reduce the heat to low, and simmer until the flavors have blended, 10 minutes. Pour the broth through a fine-mesh strainer and discard the solids in the strainer. Rinse the saucepan and return the broth mixture to the pan.

2. Return the pan to medium-high heat. Stir the remaining can of coconut milk and sugar into the broth mixture and bring to a simmer. Reduce heat to medium, add mushrooms, and cook until just tender, 2 to 3 minutes. Add chicken and cook, stirring constantly, until no longer pink, 1 to 3 minutes. Remove soup from heat.

3. Combine lime juice, curry paste, and remaining 2 tablespoons fish sauce in small bowl; stir into soup. Ladle soup into bowls and garnish with cilantro, chiles, and scallions. Serve immediately with lime wedges.