

Thai Soup (Tom Yum Soup with Mushrooms and Tofu)

Source: Real Vegetarian Thai by Nancie McDermott (Jan. '06) from Peggy

Ingredients

- 4 cups Vegetable Stock
- 3 large Stalks Lemongrass
- 12 Wild Lime Leaves (optional)
- 2½ Freshly Squeezed Lime Juice
- 3 Green Onions, Cut Crosswise In 1" Lengths
- 1 Fresh Green Jalapeno Chili
- 8 ounces Firm Tofu (or Chicken), Cut Into 1" Chunks
- 1 cup Canned Whole Straw Mushrooms *
- 2 Roasted Chili Paste
- 2 teaspoons Sugar
- ½ teaspoon Soy Sauce
- ½ teaspoon Salt

Method

In a large saucepan, bring the vegetable stock to a boil over medium heat. Meanwhile, trim the lemongrass stalks: Cut away and discard any hard, dried root portions, leaving a smooth, flat base just below the bulb. Trim away the tops, including any dried brown leaf portions; you should have handsome stalks about 6 inches long, including the bulbous base. Using the blunt edge of a cleaver blade or heavy knife or the side of an unopened can, bruise each stalk, whacking it firmly at 2" intervals and rolling it over to bruise on all sides. Cut into 2" lengths.

When the stock is boiling, add the bruised lemongrass stalks and half of the lime leaves (if using), and reduce the heat to maintain a simmer. Cook until the stock is fragrant and the lemongrass has faded from bright green to a dull khaki, about 5 minutes.

While the soup simmers, combine the lime juice, the remaining lime leaves (if using) and the green onions in a serving bowl large enough to accommodate the soup. Remove the stem from the jalapeno and cut the chili crosswise into thick rounds; add 2 or more of the rounds to the serving bowl; the amount depends on your love of chili heat. Reserve any leftover chili for another use and set aside.

Scoop out the lemongrass from the stock and discard it. Raise the heat to high and add the tofu, straw or button mushrooms, chili paste, sugar, soy sauce, and salt and stir well. When the soup boils again, remove it from the heat and quickly pour it into the serving bowl. Stir to combine the lime juice and herbs with the soup and serve at once.

Notes

This soup should be intensely and wonderfully sour, salty, and spicy hot. If you like, check the seasoning just before serving and fine tune to your liking. To make this soup in advance, hold the lime juice mixture aside until serving time and then gently reheat the soup, combine it with the lime juice mixture, and serve at once.

This can be served along with rice, either on the side or in the soup.

*or sliced fresh button mushrooms