

Masak Kuah Pedas Recipe

Ingredients:

800 g fish or prawns (shrimps), using pomfret, wolf herring, mackerel or an fish steak
8 pieces dried tamarind fruit
4 cups water
1 1/4 teaspoons salt
1 teaspoon chili shrimp paste (sambal belachan)
2 teaspoons lard
2 teaspoons sugar
4 limes, squeezed for juice

Spice Mixture:

6 candlenuts or buah keras
1 large piece galangal or lengkuas
1/2 thumb length turmeric root or kunyit
4 to 6 fresh red chilies
1 tablespoon or 15 g shrimp paste or belachan
200 g shallots

Method:

Scrape off turmeric and galangal skin; slice roughly. Peel and slice shallots roughly. Wash and drain dried tamarind. Pound candlenuts, galangal, turmeric, chilies and shrimp paste until fine, adding each ingredient in that order. Add shallots and pound briefly - they should be coarse. Put water in a saucepan or Indian clay curry pot. Add pounded ingredients and tamarind; bring to the boil over High Heat, then lower to let it simmer for 1/2 hour. Add salt and fish (if using prawns, leave shells on and trim feelers) and boil for 5 to 10 minutes till cooked. Meanwhile, mix the sambal belachan, lard, sugar and lime juice (add some thin slices of lime skin) in a small bowl. Just before turning off the heat, add in this mixture (if you taste the soup before and after the addition you will realize what a world of difference it makes to the dish). If you wish, add sliced pineapples and tomato wedges to the gravy for added flavor. Leftover gravy can be kept in the fridge for up to a week and fish added as and when required. Foodies say this dish tastes even better after a few days, when the sourness achieves a mature flavor.