

Mushrooms and Chicken in Banana Leaf Recipe

(Pepes Ayam Jamur)

Ingredients:

500 g chicken thighs, boned and cut into 1.5cm cubes
125 g shiitake mushrooms, soaked until soft, stems removed and diced
2 eggs, well beaten
60 ml coconut cream
50 g scallions, finely sliced
a pinch of salt or to taste
a pinch of freshly crushed white peppercorns or to taste
8 salam leaves (Indonesian bay leaves)
8 banana leaf wrappers, each about 25 x 18 cm (10 x 7 in)

Spice paste:

30 g garlic, peeled and sliced
50 g shallots, peeled and sliced
25 g ginger, peeled and sliced
40 g red chilies, halved, seeded and sliced
25 g candlenuts, roasted and crushed
a pinch of salt or to taste
3 tablespoons vegetable oil

Method:

Prepare spice paste. Combine all ingredients, except oil, in a stone mortar or blender (processor) and grind until very fine. Heat oil in heavy saucepan. Add spice paste and sauté over medium heat until fragrant, then remove from heat and leave to cool to room temperature. Combine all remaining ingredients, except salam and banana leaves, in a large bowl and mix until chicken and mushrooms are well coated. Soften each banana leaf wrapper by either holding it over a gas flame or soaking in boiling water for 3 seconds. Place a salam leaf at the centre of a banana leaf wrapper and top with 2 tablespoons chicken and mushroom mixture. Take one long edge of the wrapper and fold it in towards the center to cover the ingredients, then roll up tightly. Secure open ends with bamboo skewers or cocktail sticks. Repeat until ingredients are used up. Steam parcels for 4 minutes, then charcoal or oven-grill for 3 minutes using very low heat. Turn parcels over at least once. Serve as desired.