

Nyonya Otak-Otak Recipe

(Steamed spicy fish pâté in banana leaves)

Ingredients:

1 banana leaf

Fish pâté ingredients:

250 ml thick coconut cream (from 1 grated coconut)

2 eggs, lightly beaten

2 tablespoons (heaped) rice flour

4 kaffir lime leaves, sliced hair-thin

1 teaspoon freshly ground pepper powder

1 tablespoon sugar, or to taste

1 teaspoon salt, or to taste

Spice to be grounded to paste:

100 g shallots, peeled

20 g garlic, peeled

40 g fresh red chilies, deseeded

6 - 8 dried red chilies, soaked a while until softened and drained

15 g galangal, sliced thinly

20 g (2-3cm) fresh turmeric

2 stalks lemon grass (use only the bottom inner tender part), sliced thinly

20 g toasted dried shrimp paste (belachan)

20 - 30 pieces betel leaves or wild pepper leaves (daun kadok), washed and let dry

500 g any white fish fillet, cut into slices and coat with some cornflour

Method:

Cut banana leaf into 18 x 20 cm rectangles and steam or scald with hot water just to soften the leaf.

Combine the fish pâté ingredients in a mixing bowl and add the spice paste. Mix to combine. To assemble, place 4-5 betel leaves in the center of a banana leaf. Top with 3 slices of fish and 2 tablespoons of the fish pâté mixture. Form into a pyramid-shaped bundle by folding up both sides of the banana leaf to meet in the center. Then fold up the two ends to meet in the center and secure with bamboo toothpicks or staples.

Steam the bundles for 10-15 minutes over rapidly boiling water to set the fish pâté. Serve either hot or at room temperature with steamed rice or bread.