

Roasted Thai Chili Paste Recipe

(nam prik pao)

Ingredients:

6-8 large dried chilies, left whole, rinsed and dried
5 shallots, unpeeled
4-5 cloves garlic, unpeeled
1 tablespoon dried shrimp paste
1 heaped tablespoon tamarind pulp, soaked in 60 ml warm water, squeezed,
and strained to obtain juice
1 tablespoon ground palm sugar
½ teaspoon salt
2 tablespoons vegetable oil

Method:

If it is convenient to use a barbecue, put the chilies, shallots and garlic on a fine mesh grill and cook over a moderately hot fire or gas flame, or cook under a hot grill or broiler. Turn the chilies just until they are crisp but not blackened, taking great care as they burn very quickly. Remove the chilies and continue cooking the shallots and garlic, turning until they are soft and the skin has started to blacken. Remove from the grill and leave aside until cool enough to handle. (Alternatively, you could cook the chilies, shallots, garlic and shrimp paste in a dry wok). Spread the shrimp paste into a thin layer on aluminum foil, enclose, then grill on both sides until fragrant. Break the stem end off each chili, break the chilies into small pieces, then transfer to a spice grinder and grind coarsely. Remove the skins from the shallots, then cut the rounded end off each garlic clove. Grab the skin of the other end and squeeze out the garlic. Add the shallots, garlic and shrimp paste to the spice grinder and process until finely ground. Heat the oil in a small pan and add the paste. Cook over low-medium heat, stirring frequently, until fragrant and cooked, about 4 to 5 minutes. Cool, then refrigerate in a covered jar.

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