

Cod Fillets with Ginger and Coconut Curry

I stumbled across this online recipe by chef Patrick Jamon of Villa Deevena restaurant in Los Pargos, Costa Rica. One of the reasons I adore it is because it makes me reminisce about culinary school. The vegetables for this dish have to be julienned, which means the vegetables are cut into very thin strips. The term 'julienne' comes from a soup with the same name, which is prepared with thin strips of vegetables garnishing it. I remember two full days at chef's school being spent on cutting skills. Our first attempt at julienne was done with carrots. Our teacher would check the thinness of the cut, and the length, and then make us do it over and over again until it was perfect. And then, when it was flawless ... you'd move on to another vegetable and eventually to another cut! **SERVES 4**

4 x 170 g cod or angelfish fillets,
skin removed
Salt to taste
2 tsp (10 ml) freshly ground
black pepper
4 tsp (20 ml) olive oil
1 large leek, white portion only,
trimmed and cut into 5 cm segments
and julienned (about 1 cup)
1 thumb-sized piece fresh ginger,
peeled and finely grated
½ thumb-sized piece fresh turmeric,
peeled and finely grated
or 1 tsp (5 ml) ground turmeric
1 small carrot, peeled and julienned
½ C (125 ml) snow peas, julienned
½ C (125 ml) fresh or frozen
green peas
1 tin (400 ml) coconut milk
½ tsp (2.5 ml) fish sauce
1 tsp (5 ml) red chilli paste
1½ Tbsp (22.5 ml) red curry paste
2 sprigs fresh coriander, for garnishing
1 red chilli, thinly sliced, for garnishing
Juice and finely grated rind of
1 small lemon

1. Preheat the oven to 100 °C. Line a baking tray with baking paper.
2. Season the fish generously with salt and pepper.
3. Heat 2 tsp (10 ml) of the olive oil in a large pan on medium to high heat.
4. Add the fish and fry until golden on both sides – about 3 minutes per side.
5. Transfer the fish to the baking tray and place in the oven to keep warm while you prepare the rest of the dish.
6. In the same pan, add the remaining oil and heat on a medium to high setting.
7. Add the leek and sauté for 2–3 minutes, stirring frequently, until lightly golden.
8. Add the ginger and turmeric and sauté for a minute or so, stirring frequently.
9. Add the carrot, snow peas and green peas and cook for 3–4 minutes, stirring occasionally, until crisp and tender.
10. Transfer the vegetables to a bowl, cover with plastic wrap and set aside.
11. Add the coconut milk, fish sauce, chilli paste and curry paste to the same pan and bring to a simmer on medium heat.
12. Reduce the heat to medium low and simmer for about 5 minutes until the liquid is further reduced.
13. Stir in the cooked vegetables and heat for about 1 minute until warmed through.
14. Divide the fish among shallow serving bowls and spoon the sauce and vegetables over the fish.
15. Garnish with fresh coriander and sliced chilli and serve hot with steamed jasmine rice (page 142).



TIP: Keep the curry sauce at a gentle simmer, rather than a vigorous boil, when reducing the coconut milk. This ensures that the curry sauce doesn't curdle. Red curry paste can vary in its intensity depending on the brand, so you'll want to adjust the amount to taste.