

Nasi dagang with tuna fish curry

Originating along the Malaysian east-coast in Terengganu and Kelantan, nasi dagang is often pitted against the equally popular nasi lemak. However, there is much difference between the two. Nasi dagang, when literally translated means 'trade rice', and generally comprises a variety of rice mixed together and cooked in coconut milk with fenugreek, resulting in deliciously creamy rice texture. It is commonly served with longfin tuna fish curry which have been, since long-past days, cooked in palm oil and coconut milk for a rich and smooth texture.

FOR NASI DAGANG

600 g Thai fragrant rice, rinsed and soaked for 2 hours
400 g wild Kelantanese red rice, rinsed and soaked for 2 hours
500 g glutinous rice, rinsed and soaked for 6 hours
500 ml coconut milk
10 shallots, thinly sliced
2 tsp fenugreek
salt and pepper to taste

For longfin tuna fish curry (Gulai ikan tongkol)

1 kg longfin tuna, cut into 2 cm fillets
500 ml + 200 ml water
3 tamarind slices (asam keping)
3 tsp sea salt
2 tbsp curry powder
1 tbsp kurma curry powder
3 tbsp dried chili paste
125 ml palm oil
250 ml coconut milk
1/2 tsp salt
1/2 tsp sugar
2 cm ginger, thinly sliced
8 pieces shallots, thinly sliced
4 cloves garlic, thinly sliced

To cook nasi dagang.

Set water to boil in a steamer. In the meantime, drain all three types of rice through a steamer then mix well. Transfer into the steamer when done, and allow the rice to steam for 20 minutes over the boiling water.

Mix coconut milk, sliced shallots, and fenugreek in a bowl. Season to taste with salt and pepper.

When rice has steamed for 20 minutes, remove from the steamer and transfer into a bowl. Pour in the coconut milk mixture, mixing well until combined. Allow the rice to sit for 10 minutes, then return the bowl to the steamer and continue to steam for 10 minutes, or 5 until it is cooked.

To cook longfin tuna curry.

Place tuna fillets in a stock pot and cover with 500 ml of water adding tamarind slices and sea salt. Simmer over medium heat until the fish has cooked, then remove from heat and leave to cool. Store chilled in refrigerator overnight.

In a large bowl, mix together curry powder kurma powder, and dried chili paste. Heat palm oil in a heavy-based stock pot, then sauté ginger, shallots, and garlic until slightly browned. Add in powder and paste mixture and continue to sauté until the blend emits a fragrance.

Pour cooked tuna into the mixture with its soaking liquid and allow to boil. Add coconut milk, and bring to a boil once more.

Season the curry with salt and sugar. Lower the heat immediately, allowing to simmer for 5 minutes before serving with nasi dagang.