Malaysian Beef Rendang

NIBBLEDISH CONTRIBUTOR

Ingredients

Serves about 4-6 people

1kg braising steak
80g desiccated coconut
3-4 fresh kaffir lime leaves, torn
1 additional stalk of lemongras 'bruised'
1 tbsp lime juice

Spice paste
3-4 medium sized red onions quartered
4cm ginger, peeled and sliced (we also use a bit of galangal - shown next to the ginger in the picture. You may be able to get it from a good Asian supermarket)
6 cloves garlic
4 stalks lemongras, outer layer removed and sliced really finely
4 tbsp dried chilli flakes (we're using blended chilli instead - basically big, powerful chillis from Malaysia, boiled, drained and blended)

To be added later (not for spice paste)
500ml coconut milk
500ml water
2 tsp salt
2 tsp sugar

Instructions

1. Cube the beef into 3cm cubes

2. Place the coconut in a dry frying pan and toast over a low heat until golden brown - it will take about 10 minutes

3. Cool for 5 minutes before grinding in a small food processor - the coconut will ooze oil and become sticky. Set aside

4. Place the spice paste ingredients in a food processor or blender. Blend to a fairly fine paste, adding a little water to help the blades work (if necessary)

5. Heat a little oil in a large pan and fry the spice paste for a couple of minutes. Then add the beef (no need to fry / brown the beef).

6. Add the water

7. Add the coconut milk

8. Bring the pan to the boil and then simmer for 1.5 hours. Cook until most of the liquid has evaporated (Malaysian curries are generally quite 'dry', if you want more sauce stop cooking after about 2 hours)

9. After 1.5 hours the curry has reduced. Add to toasted coconut, kaffir lime leaves and lime juice

10. Bruise a stalk of lemongrass (I use a saucepan) and add it to the curry

11. Cook for another 30 minutes to an hour. Use your judgement as to how much sauce you want with it

The finished dish should be served with rice and roti canai (a Malaysian / Indian 'pancake')

Note: during the cooking you may find that a layer of oil appears - this is quite normal and is from the toasted coconut. Keep cooking slowly and it will disappear / soak back into the curry.