



Spicy Shrimp and Torch Ginger Salad

NIBBLEDISH CONTRIBUTOR

Ingredients

6 large prawns, peeled, deveined and blanched

1 cup blanched minced pork

3 tablespoons tender petals of torch ginger, julienned

2 tablespoons cashew nuts, soaked in salt water and drained

1 tablespoon bergamot peel, julienned

1 tablespoon tender white part of lemongrass, julienned

1 tablespoon bergamot leaf, julienned

1 tablespoon fried shallot flakes

1 tablespoon fried garlic flakes

Enough oil for deep-frying

For the dressing:

8 cloves small garlic

12 small shallots

2 tablespoon palm sugar

2 chili (I use prik chee fah - ?????????? - They are about three times bigger than bird's

eye chili - ?????????? - but less pungent and spicy)

2 tablespoon lime juice

2 tablespoon tamarind paste

1 tablespoon fish sauce

Pinch of salt

Instructions

[Torch ginger](#) is a common ingredient in Southeast Asian cooking. It is commonly included in a rice salad from Southern Thailand. Here, I am using it to make a simple shrimp salad that is every bit just as good.

If you can't get torch ginger, use Japanese [myoga](#). They are from the same species and taste quite similar.

1. In a mortar and pestle, add in the chili and pinch of salt. The salt will act as a sort of grinder. Pound the mixture into a paste. Add the garlic. Pound again into a paste. Then add the shallots and pound everything together. Next, add in the palm sugar. Give it another round of good pounding. When done, add the fish sauce, lime juice, and tamarind paste. Mix well, taste and see if you need to add more of something. Actually, the amount given for the dressing is only a guideline. As I was making it, I add a little of this and that until I was happy with how it tasted.

The reason the ingredients are pounded individually is because it is easier to get them into a fine paste, esp. if you are working with large quantities. Always start with the ingredient that is the hardest to pound into a paste.

3. Heat up a pan of oil on medium heat and deep-fry the cashew nuts until crispy. Alternatively, you can also roast them. The pre-soaked in brine is a technique my Mom got from a restaurant. It makes the cashew nuts crispier and won't dry out when roasted or fried.

4. In a plate, put in the pork. Place the shrimp on top. Sprinkle with cashew nuts, garlic & shallot flakes, bergamot leaf & peel, lemongrass, and torch ginger.

5. Pour in the dressing just before serving. Mix well and enjoy.