

Tom Kha Gai

approx. 4 good portions

I ate Tom Kha Gai at Susanne Affolter's for the first time. Of course, I had already tried the soup in many Thai restaurants, but Susanne's tasted the best. She originally got the recipe from Suzie Smith and then modified it to suit her taste.

Tom kha gai soup can be a little spicy, but the most important thing is that it is cooked quickly. This allows the wonderful flavours of the spices and herbs to develop optimally.

Caution: Be careful when cutting the hot chillies! Remember never - really never - to touch your eyes. Otherwise you'll spend the evening either crying or with one eye that won't open.

Are you ready? Then let's get started!

4 PORTIONS • DURATION > 30 min • LEVEL OF DICTY easy • Asian Cuisine

Ingredients

Herbs & spices:

3 bunches coriander with roots

10 cm ginger root

5 hot red chillies

100 g galangal

20 lime leaves (usually in the freezer at the Asian grocery store)

5 lemongrass sticks

Vegetables:

1 red onion

4 cloves of garlic

approx. 6-8 small, round, green aubergines

150 g brown mushrooms

Liquids & Seasoning:

300 ml olive oil

2 x 500 ml coconut milk

50 ml fish sauce

1 litre chicken stock (preferably home-made)

Juice of 8-10 limes

Meat:

approx. 600 g chicken breast or shredded soup chicken (skin removed)

PREPARATION of the tom kha gailt is important that you have everything ready, as cooking is then very quick because everything has to be fresh and not cooked for ages. So being well prepared is the be-all and end-all.

PREPARING THE SPICE PASTE

1. Chop the garlic, ginger, onion, chillies (deseed) and coriander roots into really small pieces. You can also grate the ginger.
2. Mix with a good dash of olive oil and keep covered in a bowl.

Preparation (Mis en Place):

Preparation is crucial as the soup needs to be cooked quickly to preserve the freshness of the ingredients.

1. **Spice paste:** Finely chop the garlic, ginger, onion, chillies (deseeded) and coriander roots. Mix with a good dash of olive oil and cover.
2. **Galangal:** Cut into thin slices depending on how tough it is.
3. **Lemongrass:** Remove the top part and cut the stalks in half lengthways.
4. **Lime leaves:** Leave 5-6 pieces whole and remove the stalks from 5-6 pieces and cut into fine strips.
5. **Limes:** Squeeze.
6. **Coriander:** Pluck the leaves and set aside for decoration. Finely chop the thick stems and set aside for the soup.
7. **Vegetables:** Prepare the aubergines and mushrooms uncut; use later.

8. **Meat:** Cut the chicken breast into small pieces or pluck the cooked chicken.

SPICE & DECO: Pluck the coriander; chop the thick parts of the stalks, after the roots, and set aside separately for the soup. Cooking the soup is quick and easy, so preparation is the be-all and end-all.

Preparing the soup:

1. **Fry the spice paste:** Fry the prepared paste in plenty of olive oil for 2–3 minutes.
Caution: The paste burns easily. Add oil if necessary.
2. **Add the spices:** add the galangal, whole lime leaves and lemongrass and sauté for a further 2–3 minutes.
3. **Add the liquids:** add the coconut milk, chicken stock and lime juice. Heat everything slowly until the soup is almost simmering.
4. **Season to taste:** Flavour with fish sauce. Season carefully in small steps.
5. **Add the vegetables:** cut the aubergines into 2×2 cm pieces and quarter the mushrooms. Add both to the soup, as well as the fine strips of lime leaf and the chopped coriander stalks. Simmer for 3 minutes.
6. **Meat and coriander:** Add the chicken and remove the pan from the heat. Stir in the coriander leaves.

Serve:

Serve the soup hot. The perfect side dish is **Jasmine Rice**.

▷ Once you've done it a few times and you've memorised it, the effort becomes less and less, including the shopping and so on. It's actually the chopping that takes the most time. The spice paste can theoretically be made in the morning and the onions kept in a separate bowl.

Side dish jasmine rice

1. **Quantity ratio:** 1 white wine glass of rice per person (approx. 2 dl).
2. **Washing & cooking:** Wash the rice thoroughly. Bring 2 parts water to the boil and stir in the rice. Simmer over a low heat until holes appear in the surface of the rice.
3. **Allow to evaporate:** remove the rice from the heat, stir and cover with a double-folded kitchen towel. This will keep it loose and dry.

▷ Tip: If the rice has cooled down, simply add some hot water and reheat briefly on the hob. [Watch my YouTube video](#)