



KHMER VEGGIE CURRY

SUBMITTED BY: AUBREY BERTRAM

Ingredients:

- 1 large red onion, roughly chopped
- 3 lemongrass stalks*, smashed & finely sliced (if you can't find fresh lemongrass, substitute lemongrass paste)
- 6 garlic cloves*, crushed
- 3 small red chilies*, chopped
- a good knob of ginger*, chopped
- a good knob of galangal*, chopped (galangal can be found at specialty Asian markets, looks very similar to ginger, but is more citrusy and piney in flavor)
- 3-6 Makrut or kefir lime leaves, finely chopped (available in specialty Asian markets)
- 3 tbsp good quality curry powder*
- 2-2½ tbsp vegetable oil
- sea salt & freshly ground pepper*
- 1 cup coconut cream (sub with full fat coconut milk if coconut cream is hard to find)
- 1 cup vegetable stock

- 2 tbsp Asian fish sauce (if vegetarian, or vegan, sub with liquid aminos or make your own non-fish fish sauce, <http://www.onegreenplanet.org/vegan-recipe/how-to-make-vegan-fish-sauce/>)
- juice of 1-2 limes*
- a selection of your favorite (local) veggies, like potatoes, peas, long or green beans, zucchini or other squashes, carrots, spinach, kale, mushrooms, broccoli, cauliflower, bell peppers - whatever looks good at your local farmers market or comes in your CSA or wherever you get produce - chopped into chunks
- 2-3 tbsp chopped fresh cilantro for garnish

Instructions:

This is a dish that I ate often while I was working and traveling in Cambodia several years ago. I learned how to cook curry in a traditional Khmer cuisine class while I was there, and have adapted it for state-side consumption. It's super simple and super tasty. Use whatever vegetables you have on hand or look good to you. Khmer dishes are traditionally less spicy and more aromatic than its other Southeast Asian counterparts, so this dish is different than likely more familiar, spicier Thai curries.

*all seasoning is to taste. If you can't find Makrut leaves or galangal in your area, don't fret. I add more lime juice and add in lime zest to compensate for that bright, citrus-y flavor.

Make a paste of the lemongrass, ginger, galangal, garlic, chilies and curry powder using a mortar and pestle or in an electronic processor, adding vegetable oil as needed. Alternatively, just chop very finely and mix together in a small bowl with a little vegetable oil to make a paste.

Add the paste to a large hot pot and fry with the onion until fragrant. Add the coconut cream or milk, vegetable stock, fish sauce, and half of the lime juice, salt and pepper to taste, and bring to a boil. Reduce heat to a simmer and add vegetables (heartier veggies like potatoes and carrots will take longer to cook than bell peppers and mushrooms, so consider adding your veggies in stages to avoid over-cooking softer veggies), cooking in the curry until veggies are soft but not mushy. If adding leafy greens, add at the end to wilt but not overcook. Serve over rice, topped with fresh lime juice and cilantro if desired.

For more protein, add tofu that has been either baked in the oven or fried in a pan (pre-cooking give the tofu more flavor and helps it retain its structure and texture). Local chicken is also a good protein addition. You can cook the chicken in the curry itself (just make sure its cooked all the way through), or cooked separately and added after.

This curry freezes well, so this is a good dish to make a large batch of and keep on hand for a quick, satisfying dinner from the freezer.