

TOM YUM (TOM YUM GOONG)

4 servings (large bowls – if you add vermicelli rice)

Ingredients:

1 pound medium shrimp - peeled and deveined (but don't throw away the heads and shells – use to make the stock)
12 mushrooms, halved or sliced
8 cups water
2 lemon grass (or frozen, chopped lemongrass...approx ¼ cup)
4 kaffir lime leaves (stems removed – and bruised)
4 slices galangal (or ginger, if you can't find galangal)
4 chile padi (bird's eye chiles)
4 tablespoons fish sauce
4 cloves crushed garlic
2 limes (or 4 T lime juice)
5-10 sprigs cilantro, chopped
1 teaspoon white sugar (I use Splenda)
1 teaspoon hot chile paste – or 3 chili peppers
2 tablespoon tom yum soup paste (optional)

I usually add some:

Half wedges of tomato
Diced green onion
1 cup (small) cubed tofu
Diced chicken (if no shrimp is available)

Method:

(If using frozen, shredded lemongrass – skip these first 2 steps)

Trim lemongrass and cut into matchstick size pieces.

Pound the lemongrass with the back of a knife – to bruise it and release the flavour.

To make stock: Peel shrimp heads and tails off the shrimp – and add them to 8 cups of water, then cook for 20 minutes. Turn the fire off.

Soak the heads and shells for further 20 minutes before discarding. There's your broth.

Into the bottom of each person's soup bowl – place 1 T fish sauce and juice of ½ -1 lime (or 1 T lime juice)

Set bowls aside

Add stock, lemon grass, kaffir lime leaves, galangal, chili padi, sugar/Splenda, and chili paste to a pot and bring to a boil. After boiling for 5 minutes, add raw shrimps and mushrooms and diced green onion and tomato wedges.

Immediately turn off heat and remove pot from element – shrimp gets too tough very quickly, and will cook even when it is just sitting in the warm broth. (10 minutes max).

1 minute before serving – toss into small cubes of soft tofu

When ready – scoop into bowls (that already contain the fish sauce and lime juice).

Garnish with coriander leaves.

I'm drooling just writing this out!



WARNING!

If you use chili peppers (instead of paste) – count the number of peppers that you put into the soup....and pick them out before you serve it. If someone bites into one....could REALLY hurt (if you're using a killer pepper).