2007 Smithsonian Folklife Festival
Mekong Recipes

Please Note: These recipes are as we received them from Festival participants. They have not been tested, and your results may vary according to equipment and availability and quality of ingredients.

Thailand

Sticky Rice
Ingredients:
1 kg white sticky rice

Directions: Soak white sticky rice in cold water for two hours – cover rice by 2-3 inches of water. Drain rice and pour into a “Huad” (covered bamboo basket which fits into a steamer pot). Pour water into pot—about 3 inches in depth. Bring water to a boil, put the “Huad” filled with white sticky rice onto the pot and allow it to steam until cooked, about 30-40 minutes.

Som-tam (papaya salad) (serves 3-4)
Ingredients:
1 medium size green papaya
2 tablespoons of pla-raa (fermented fish)
4 tomatoes sliced
Sliced hot chilies (to taste)
1 clove garlic
Juice of 3 limes
fish sauce
optional: broken peanuts and cilantro

Directions: Slice the green papaya into very thin strips (like peeling a carrot). Pound the chilies a little in a mortar, add the garlic and pound them together. Mix together the sliced papaya, pla-raa, sliced tomatoes, lime juice, fish sauce.

Lisu Egg Soup with Spices (serves 10)
Ingredients:
1½ quarts stock (chicken)
3-4 eggs
½ teaspoon salt
2-3 tablespoons fish sauce
1 teaspoon white pepper powder
1 teaspoons chili powder
Spices to taste (star anise, cardamom, cassia, cumin, coriander seed)
Directions: For the stock: put 1.5 liters of water in a cooking pot and heat over medium heat, add half the spices to taste. Crack eggs into a bowl & beat, slowly pour into hot stock and stir until cooked. Add the salt, pepper powder, fish sauce, and chili powder. Boil the contents in the pot for around 2 to 3 minutes. Turns off the heat and finish spicing to taste.

Laab (ground spicy beef with mint leaves) (serves 6)

Ingredients:
½ kg/ 1.1 pounds ground beef
10 mint leaves
3 cloves garlic
1 tablespoon chopped shallots
1 tablespoon rice powder (ground rice, browned in a dry skillet)
1 teaspoon chili powder
1 tablespoon chopped spring onion (green onion)
1 teaspoon ground coriander seeds
2 tablespoons lemon or lime juice
1 teaspoon salt
1 tablespoon fish sauce
1 tablespoon pla-raa (fermented fish paste) optional

Directions: Brown ground beef over medium low heat, without oil, until pink is gone. Place beef in mixing bowl, let cool for 5 minutes. Wrap chopped shallot and garlic in aluminum foil, put on heat (or in oven) until almost burned, then unwrap and pound them. Add shallot and garlic to the beef, season the beef with fish sauce, salt and pla-raa. If pla-raa is used, then fish sauce and salt can be reduced. Add lemon or lime juice, coriander seed powder, brown rice powder, chili powder and chopped green onion. Add any other seasonings to taste, then put beef on serving plate and top with fresh lettuce leaves and mint leaves. Serve with fresh vegetables and hot rice.

Tom Som Pla (sweet and sour fish soup) (serves 10)

Ingredients:
2 kg/ 2 lbs. river fish, or catfish/tilapia/etc.
300 g/ 4 oz. young galangal
10 lemon grass stalks
10 Kaffir lime leaves
200 g/ 3 oz. parsley
3 oz. shallots
4 tablespoons cilantro/coriander leaves
4 tablespoons spring onion
4 tablespoons dried chili
4 tablespoons bird chili
4 oz. cherry tomatoes
2 oz. shrimp paste
2 quarts stock
Directions: Chop fish filets into bite sized pieces and set aside. Bring the stock to boil and season to taste. Boil chopped vegetables in pot and add fish and simmer for 3 minutes. Sprinkle cilantro, spring onions, and dried chilies. Squeeze in lime juice.

Sai-ua (Smoked Lanna Sausage) (serves 10)
Ingredients:
2 lbs. Minced pork
3 tablespoons fresh turmeric
5 tablespoons dried chili
5 tablespoons sliced shallots
10 lemon grass stalks
20 Kaffir lime leave
Cleaned pork intestines/ sausage casings
Sugar to taste
Salt to taste
Thai Curry powder to taste

Directions: Pound turmeric, dried chili, shallots, lemon grass, and Kaffir limes leaves together in a mortar until it’s a smooth paste. Mix minced pork with the paste until blended and add salt, sugar to taste and then add a bit of curry powder. Set aside for 30 minutes. Stuff the prepared minced pork into the intestines with a funnel, not too tight, and tie at intervals of 3-4 inches, or as a circle and at both ends with threads. Grill at low heat for 30 minutes. While grilling, use the sharp stick to prick the case to release pressure and apply oil along the case to prevent breaking. Lift off from the heat when it is golden brown and smells good. When cool, cut into pieces. Serve with fresh vegetables.

Nam Prik Num (Northern Thai Chili Relish) (serves 10)
Ingredients:
1 lb. prik num (green banana chili or other large Thai chili)
½ lb. shallots, unpeeled
½ lb. garlic cloves, unpeeled
Salt, sugar, and fish sauce to taste
pla-raa (fermented fish) or kapi (shrimp paste) (optional)

Directions: Grill prik num, shallots and garlic together until well cooked and fragrant. Let them cool, peel and pound in a mortar until smooth. Season with salt, fish sauce, and sugar to taste. Serve with fresh vegetables, sticky rice and fried pork skins.

Nam Miang (pickled tea leaves) (serves 10)
Ingredients:
2 lbs. browned rice powder
Pickled tea leaves
1 cup liquid from pickled tea leaves (or rinse strong tea in the hot water and use the filtered water)
4 tablespoons young ginger chopped in small strips
2 lbs. fried shallots,
Friend garlic, 30 cloves
3 tablespoons coriander
¼ lbs. ground pork roasted in skillet or fried with no oil (optional)
Salt
Sugar

**Directions**: Cook pickled tea leaves with two glasses of water until water reaches boiling. Mix in the browned rice powder. Add salt and sugar to taste. Bring the leaves and cooked rice powder out of water, mix with gingers and shallots. To serve, place on a plate and cover with fried shallots, fried garlic, coriander, and roasted ground pork.

**Kao Tom Hua Ngok** (serves 10)
**Ingredients:**
3 quarts sticky rice (glutinous rice)
1 cluster ripened cultivated bananas
1 lb. ground dried, unroasted peanuts
1 tablespoon salt
2 lbs. sugar
2 fresh coconuts
5 lbs. banana leaves to use as a wrapper
thread or bamboo string (to tie wrapper)

**Directions**: Soak sticky rice with water for about 1 hour, add 1 tablespoon of salt. Cut banana leaf into long strips, shape into four pieces. Soak peanuts in water for 30 minutes. Measure the size of the banana leaves and tear them into proper size needed. Drain the water off the rice and peanuts. Layer two pieces of banana leaf, then place banana slice on. Put about two tablespoons of rice on banana leaf, topping with peanuts. Wrap the banana leaf into rectangle shape. Repeat until rice is used up. Bundle all banana-leaf wrapped rice together. One bundle consists of 10 wrappings. Put them in the boiling pot. Pour the water until the water level is above the wrappings and boil until done. Peel off the banana leaf and cut rice into small bites piece and arrange them on plate and top with sugar and coconut flake.

**Khao Som (sour rice)** (serves 10)
**Ingredients:**
1 saucepan (1 liter) steamed white rice
1 cup minced tomatoes
1 lb. ground pork fried without oil until dry
Fried dried chili
Fried garlic
Salt
Sugar
Cucumbers
Spring onions
Coriander
Fresh ginger

**Directions**: Stir fry tomatoes with fried garlic oil until the tomatoes are soft and mushy, about 20 minutes over medium heat. Season dry fried pork with salt and sugar. Over low heat, mix steamed rice with pork and everything but the fried garlic until rice turns orange. Mix the oil from the in fried garlic and turn off heat and set aside. Serve topped with fried garlic.

**Aom–Pla/Aom-Kai (Fish/Chicken and Bean Curry) (serves 3-4)**
Ingredients:
1.5 cups of meat/fish for making of curry, catfish or chicken
4 tablespoons pla-raa (local preserved fish)
10 or more chilies
5 spring onions
4 handfuls vegetables: water spinach, small eggplant or other tender vegetables
2 lemon grass stalks
1 handful Kaffir lime leaves
Fish sauce

**Directions**: Chop up catfish or chicken and put it in a bowl. Pound chili and lemon grass together. Heat a pan, put in the catfish/chicken, chili and lemon grasses mixture, or pla-raa. Add a little fish sauce then stir-fry the mixture till meat is well-cooked. If it is too dry, add some water. Put the stir-fried mixture into a pot and add water and vegetables and boil. Flavor it with fish sauce.

**Kaeng Hang le Curry (serves 10)**
Ingredients:
6 lbs. pork loin and bacon (belly of pork)
1 lb. ginger
1 lb. ground peanuts
6 packets of hang le powder (turmeric powder, cinnamon, tamarind)
Black soy bean sauce
White soy bean sauce
Sugar
Salt

For curry paste:
1 lb. dried chili
1/3 lb. galangal (Siamese ginger)
5 lemon grass stalks
1 lb. garlic
1 lb. shallot
1/3 lb. turmeric
1 tablespoon kapi (shrimp paste)
Directions: Pound all paste mix together until smooth and set aside. Chop both kinds of pork into big square chunks, rinse and set aside to drain. Mix the curry paste with pork and add 3 tablespoons of sweet black soy bean sauce, sugar, white soy bean sauce, a bit of salt and let it marinate for about one hour. Put the seasoned pork into the skillet and stir-fry it without oil, add some water if the pork is dry, and cook over low heat until pork is well cooked.

Vietnam

Vietnamese Cakes:
Tét Cake:
Ingredients:
2 lbs. sticky rice
3 cups dry coconut grated
2 cups mung beans
Salt and fish sauce to taste, approx. 8 oz.
1 pound fresh pork, diced (lean and fat meat mixed)
Banana leaves to wrap
Sugar 8-10 oz
Rush strings or butcher’s twine

Directions: Combine sticky rice with coconut, beans, salt, sugar, pork—mix well. Wrap in banana leaves and tie leaves together with strings. Steam for 2-3 hours in a covered container; add more water for steam occasionally. Cook until rice and beans are soft. Serve with fresh vegetables and herbs, chile sauce

Cambodia

Stir-fry Spicy Beef with Peanuts
Ingredients:
1/3 lb. tenderloin beef, sliced into thin 1 inch pieces kroeung (an herb paste that is a blend of ground lemon grass, galangal, ginger, turmeric, garlic and fish sauce)
1 tablespoons lemon grass leaves, sliced thinly
1 tablespoons galangal, cut small
1 tablespoons garlic
Pinch of black pepper
1/4 cup peanuts, roasted and chopped
1 tablespoon fish sauce
1 teaspoon sugar

Directions: Heat a skillet or wok to high heat with a tablespoon of peanut oil. Add beef and stir until color changes, add lemon grass, galangal, garlic, pepper and kroeung paste. Cook long enough for paste to heat through thoroughly and until it starts to thicken and covers beef. Add fish sauce, sugar, and peanuts, and serve.

S ngo Chruok Bangkang
Ingredients:
½ lb. lobster and/or Rockfish filet
4 cups water
1 lemongrass stalk, cut in 10 cm pieces
1 tablespoons uncooked rice
1 tablespoons salt
1 tablespoons fish sauce
1 teaspoons sugar
⅓ cup combination of mint and basil leaves, and cut spring onions
Juice of 1-2 limes

**Directions:** Place uncooked rice and salt in a pot with water (enough to cover fish) and bring to a boil. Add cut lemongrass, fish sauce, salt, and sugar to pot. Add fish and/or lobster and simmer for 15-20 minutes. To serve, add crack lobster, add herbs, spring onions, and lime.

**Nam Banh-Chok Kampot (Rice Noodles Kampot Style)**
**Ingredients:**
1 lb. rice noodles, soaked in warm water until soft
1/3 lb. dried shrimps, soaked in hot water until soft
4 cups coconut milk warmed
2 cups ripe pineapple cut in small chunks
2 cups bean sprouts
2 cups cucumber cut the same size as pineapple
2 cups chili sliced

For sauce: mix together
2 tablespoons fish sauce
1 tablespoons water
1 tablespoons sugar
1 tablespoons vinegar
2 cloves garlic, sliced thinly
2 shallots, sliced thinly

**Directions:** Drain shrimp pound in mortar to coarse texture. Drain and dunk noodles in warmed coconut milk, just to coat—arrange on plate. Add vegetables, pineapple, shrimp on top with some coconut milk and sauce, the rest is to be added as desired, put in bowls to serve with noodles.