

Shrimp & Vermicelli Summer Rolls

makes 8

Ingredients

8 sheets of Rice paper (4" rounds or larger)

8 leaves fresh lettuce or leafy greens

Handful of fresh Vietnamese herbs (basil, mint, cilantro)

Plateful of fresh vegetables of any kind, julienne (bell peppers, carrots, celery, zucchini, cucumbers)

1 bunch of scallions, trimmed

Cooked medium shrimp, cut in half to give you two even sides

½ package of thin rice vermicelli noodles, cooked according to the package and cool to touch warm water

Deep dish large enough to fit rice paper

Directions

In a large bowl, fill with warm water. Quickly dip each rice paper in warm water for about 2-3 seconds.

Place wet rice paper on a plastic work surface. Make sure rice paper is completely hydrated and softened before rolling.

Place the rice noodles, fresh herbs, and vegetables on one side of the wrapper, and 3 pieces of shrimp on the other, and the spring onion in the middle – with one end hanging off the end.

Start rolling from the side with the herbs on it first. Once you're halfway across, fold in the ends, then continue to the side with the shrimp on it.

Serve immediately or within 2 hours. These rolls can be covered with plastic wrap and kept in the refrigerator, but the rice paper will begin to lose moisture and harden.

Rolls can be served as whole rolls, cut in half or even cut in bite size pieces, like cut sushi.

Serve with **Peanut dipping sauce**.

Peanut dipping Sauce

2/3 cup hoisin sauce

1/3 cup creamy peanut butter

1/3 cup water

3 tablespoons fresh lime juice

1 1/2 tablespoons soy sauce

Directions for Sauce

Mix all ingredients together well. Serve with spring rolls. This recipe will make about 1/2 cup dip.

Massaman Chicken Curry

Serves 4-6

Ingredients

2 tablespoons vegetable oil
1/2 small onion (sliced)
1 (2-inch) piece ginger (peeled, grated)
4 to 5 cloves garlic (minced)
1 Thai bird's eye chili (sliced; or 1/2 to 3/4 teaspoons chili flakes or cayenne pepper)
1/2 cup chicken stock (good-tasting)
1 stalk of lemongrass (bottom four inches, minced; or 2 to 3 tablespoons frozen/bottled-prepared lemongrass)
3 bay leaves
1 teaspoon turmeric
1/4 cup chopped unsalted dry-roasted cashews (plus handful more to finish)
1 teaspoon ground coriander
1 teaspoon whole cumin seed
1/8 teaspoon cardamom
1 teaspoon tamarind concentrate or lime juice
3 tablespoons fish sauce
1 tablespoon brown sugar
1/2 to 1 pound chicken pieces (or chopped chicken breast/thigh)
1 (14-ounce) can coconut milk (not lite)
1 to 2 medium waxy potatoes (cut into 1-inch chunks)
1 small red bell pepper (thinly sliced)
1 medium tomato (halved and sliced 1/4-inch thick)
Garnish: chopped cilantro

Heat a wok, large frying pan, or soup-type pot over medium-high heat. Drizzle in the oil and swirl around, then add the onion, ginger, garlic, and chili. Stir-fry 1 to 2 minutes to release the fragrance.

Add the stock plus the following: lemongrass, bay leaves, turmeric, chopped cashews, ground coriander, whole cumin seed, cardamom, tamarind (or lime juice), fish sauce, and sugar. Stir with each addition and bring to a light boil.

Add the chicken, stirring to coat with the spicy liquid, then add the coconut milk and potatoes. Stir and bring back up to a boil. Reduce heat to low, or just until you get a good simmer.

Simmer for 30 to 40 minutes, stirring occasionally, until chicken and potatoes are tender. Add the red bell pepper and tomato during the last 10 to 15 minutes of cooking time. If you prefer a more liquid curry sauce, cover while simmering. If you prefer a thicker curry sauce, leave off the lid.

Taste-test the curry, adding more fish sauce for increased flavor/saltiness, or more chili if you want it spicier. If too sour, add a little more sugar. If too salty or sweet for your taste, add a touch more tamarind or lime juice. If too spicy, add more coconut milk.

Add a handful more cashews and fold in. Transfer to a serving bowl, or plate up on individual plates or bowls. Top with fresh coriander, if desired, and serve with Thai jasmine rice.

Banana Coconut Fritters

Serves 4-6 people

One pound of peeled bananas (the small, stubby Burro bananas found in International markets)
1 cup plus 2 tablespoons rice flour (or 50% rice flour and 50% all-purpose flour for heartier crust)

1/2 cup sugar

1/2 cup unsweetened dried coconut flakes (or fresh very finely-grated coconut or frozen grated coconut, thawed)

3/4 cup water with 1.5 teaspoons baking soda mixed in

1 1/2 teaspoons salt

1 tablespoon plain white sesame seeds

About 4 cups of mild vegetable oil for frying

Slice the bananas lengthwise into 1/4-inch slices; set aside.

Whisk together the rest of the ingredients, except the oil.

In a medium frying pan or heavy-bottomed pot, heat up the oil to about 350° F. Keep the temperature steady.

Put the banana slices into the batter. Pick up one slice at a time, making sure it's thoroughly coated with the batter, and carefully lower it into the hot oil. Don't fry too many slices of banana at the same time as it will cause the oil temperature to drop too low resulting in soggy, oily fried bananas.

Flip the banana pieces as necessary to achieve even browning.

Once the banana slices are golden brown, remove them to a plate lined with a piece of paper towel.

Serve immediately.