

OTAK OTAK

Otak Otak is savoury fish custard with fragrant curry flavours and is eaten all over Malaysia and Singapore in various forms, usually wrapped in banana leaves and steamed, but sometimes also grilled. Otak otak is delicious and so easy. Thanks Sandra Bee for making this for us!



Serves: 4

Time: 40 minutes



INGREDIENTS

400 grams (14 oz) white fish fillets, cubed
1 tsp soy sauce
1 tsp sesame oil
1/2 tsp ground pepper
10 grams (0.35 oz) garlic (approx. 2-3 cloves)
80 grams (3 oz) onion, roughly chopped
80 grams (3 oz) shallots
10 grams (0.35 oz) dried chilli, soaked and drained
10 grams (0.35 oz) galangal (see Tips)
15 grams (0.5 oz) fresh turmeric (see Tips)
20 grams (0.7 oz) ginger
15 grams (0.5 oz) candlenuts or macadamias (see Tips)
30 grams (1 oz) vegetable oil
2 eggs
90 grams (3.17 oz) coconut cream
4 Kaffir lime leaves, thinly sliced
6 kadok leaves, thinly sliced, plus extra to line ramekins, optional (see Tips)



METHOD

1. Toss fish with soy, sesame and pepper in a bowl. Set aside.
2. Add onion, ginger, chilli, nuts, turmeric, garlic and galangal into mixing bowl. Chop **30 sec/speed 10**.
3. Add oil and chop 5 sec/speed 6. Scrape down sides of mixing bowl then saute **3 min/120°C (250°F)/Rev/speed soft**.
4. Add fish, eggs, coconut cream, lime leaves, kadok leaves, if using. Mix **10 sec/Rev/speed 3**.
5. Transfer mixture into four ramekins, each lined with a kadok leaf, if using. Otherwise, just rub a little oil or butter in ramekins. Place ramekins in Varoma. Pour 1L (35 oz) water into mixing bowl and set Varoma in place. Steam **25 min/Varoma/speed 2** or until just set. Eat warm or cool.

Tips

- Galangal is a knobbly rhizome that looks similar to ginger but is darker, firmer and more fibrous. The flavour is earthy, citrusy and almost piney. If you can't find fresh turmeric, add a teaspoon of powdered turmeric along with the fish.
- Candlenuts are a creamy nut, similar to a macadamia, and often used in south-east Asian cooking for thickening dishes. Sandra calls them 'buah keras' in Malay.



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- Kadok leaves are native to south-east Asia; they are sometimes called wild pepper leaf and are often confused with betel leaves. Even more confusingly, they're sometimes called wild betel leaves too! If you're not lucky enough to find them, you can just leave them out. Alternatively, add a little ground pepper and a squeeze of lemon to approximate the flavour.
- Make mixture in advance, ready for steaming at mealtime.
- Use any size ramekins but adjust cooking time to suit. Smaller ramekins won't need as long.
- As Sandra says, you can cover ramekins with foil to prevent water dripping on them as they steam, but it's easy enough to pour it off after cooking too.



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Serves: 4



SHOPPING LIST:

- White fish fillets (400 grams / 14 oz)
- Soy sauce (1 tsp)
- Sesame oil (1 tsp)
- Ground pepper (½ tsp)
- Garlic (10 grams / 0.35 oz)
- Onion (80 grams / 3 oz)
- Shallots (80 grams / 3 oz)
- Dried chilli (10 grams / 0.35 oz)
- Galangal (10 grams / 0.35 oz)
- Fresh turmeric (15 grams / 0.5 oz)
- Ginger (20 grams / 0.7 oz)
- Candlenuts or macadamias (15 grams / 0.5 oz)
- Vegetable oil (30 grams / 1 oz)
- Eggs (2)
- Coconut cream (90 grams / 3.17 oz)
- Kaffir lime leaves (4)
- Kadok leaves, optional (10)