

ASIAN CHICKEN



Ingredients (serves 4 people):

Chicken

160 g dried figs

30 g pickled ginger

1/2 spring onion, chopped

Salt to taste
Pepper to taste
Chicken thighs

Steamed Asian-style Vegetables

Baby bok choy broken into individual leaves
Chinese cabbage, roughly chopped
Daikon radish, peeled and cut into strips lengthways
Carrots, peeled and shaved lengthways into ribbons

Cashew Nut Sauce

30 ml sunflower oil
3 shallots, peeled and diced
1 clove garlic, peeled and finely chopped
50 g fresh ginger peeled and chopped
1 small hot red chilli, deseeded and chopped
1/2 red pepper or capsicum, deseeded and diced
1 tsp ground cumin
300 ml coconut cream
200 ml fresh cream
250 g cashew nuts, roasted but unsalted
30 g brown sugar
1 stalk lemongrass, centre part only
20 ml lemon juice
Salt to taste
Pepper to taste
Handful coriander leaves, some left whole, some finely chopped

Wild Rice Roll

3 tbsp butter
100 g shiitake mushrooms

150 g flat mushrooms
200 g wild rice, cooked
1 spring onion, finely diced
1/2 red pepper or capsicum, deseeded and finely diced
Salt to taste
Pepper to taste
8 spring roll wrappers available in Asian food stores
White of 1 egg, lightly beaten
1 litre peanut or sunflower oil

Preparation:

1. Place figs, ginger and spring onion in a food processor and blend briefly to a chunky consistency, but not a paste and season to taste.
2. Stuff the mixture under the skin of each chicken thigh and use toothpicks to secure the skin back into its original position and seal the join.
3. Season lightly and roast in a 180° C oven for 7-10 minutes.
4. Steam or blanch in salted water for 1 minute, until cooked but still crisp.
5. Heat the oil in a heavy-based pan and gently fry the shallots, garlic, ginger, chilli, pepper and cumin until they are soft but not colored.
6. Add the remaining ingredients except the coriander leaves, bring to the boil, stirring, then reduce heat and simmer for 5 minutes.
7. Remove from heat, allow to cool slightly, then blend in food processor to a smooth sauce consistency.
8. Season to taste and garnish with the chopped coriander.
9. Heat the butter in a heavy-based frypan and cook the mushrooms.
10. Allow to cool slightly, then dice.
11. Mix with the wild rice, add the spring onion and red pepper and season to taste.
12. Place a spring roll wrapper on the bench with one corner facing you. Place a quarter of the wild rice mixture in the middle.
13. Brush the edges with egg white, then fold the bottom point over the mixture.
14. Fold in the side points, sealing the filling in, then follow through with the bottom edge to complete the roll.
15. Place on another wrapper and repeat the process, forming a double layer.

16. When you have four rolls, they can be deep-fried in peanut or canola oil for approximately 4 minutes, or until golden brown.
17. To serve divide the cashew nut sauce between four preheated shallow bowls.
18. Arrange some of the Asian vegetables on top, then place a roasted chicken thigh, cut on the diagonal to show the filling, on top of each pile of vegetables.
19. Lean a spring roll, also cut diagonally to show the filling, against each chicken thigh.
20. Garnish whole coriander leaves.