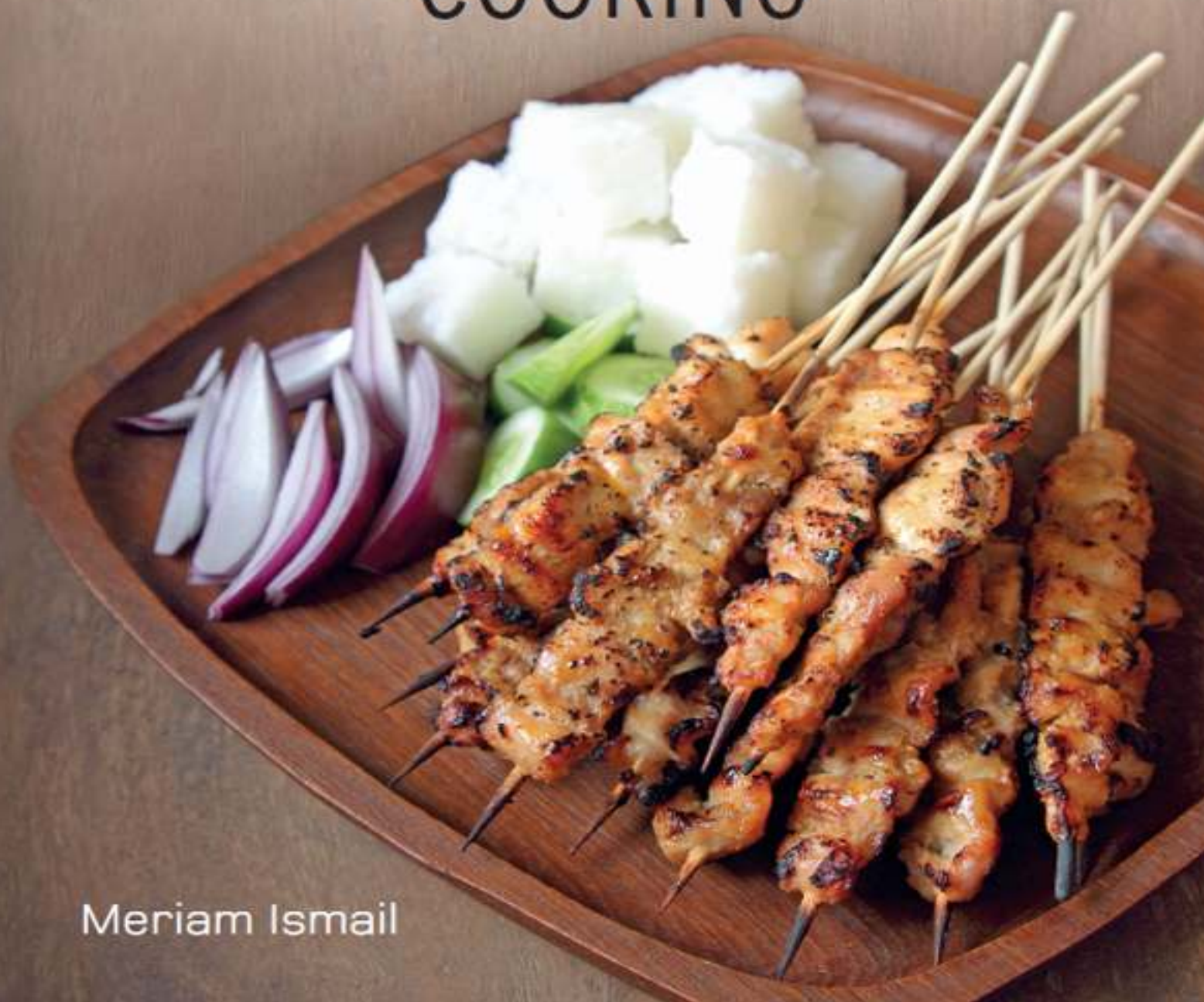


Periplus Mini Cookbooks

Authentic

# Malay

COOKING



Meriam Ismail

## Measurement Conversions

All our recipes are thoroughly tested in the Periplus Test Kitchen. Standard metric measuring cups and spoons are used throughout, and all cup and spoon measurements are level. We have used medium-sized (60 g, grade 3) eggs in all recipes.

## International Measures

### Volume

1 teaspoon = 5 ml  
 1 UK/US tablespoon = 15 ml = 3 teaspoons  
 1 Australian tablespoon = 20 ml = 4 teaspoons

### Lengths

6 mm = 1/4 inch  
 12 mm = 1/2 inch  
 2.5 cm = 1 inch

### Weights

28 g = 1 oz  
 250 g = 8 oz  
 500 g = 1 lb

We have used international 15 ml tablespoon measures. If you are using an Australian 20 ml tablespoon, the difference will not be noticeable for most recipes. However, for flour, cornstarch or baking powder, subtract one teaspoon for each tablespoon specified.

## Cup Equivalents

<p>1/4 cup = 60 ml = 2 fl oz                  1/2 cup = 125 ml = 4 fl oz                  1 cup = 250 ml = 8 fl oz                  2 cups = 500 ml = 16 fl oz = 1 pint                  4 cups = 1 liter = 32 fl oz = 1 quart</p>	<p>1 cup coriander leaves = 50 g                  1 cup shaved palm sugar = 200 g                  1 cup chilli paste = 200 g                  1 cup plain flour = 150 g                  1 cup roasted peanuts = 150 g                  1 cup uncooked rice = 200 g</p>
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## Oven Temperature Guide

<p>When using convection ovens, the outside of the food may cook too quickly. As a general rule, set the oven temperature 15°C to 20°C lower than the temperature indicated in the recipe, or refer to your oven manual.</p>		°C	°F
Low		150	300
Moderate		180	350
Med. Hot		200	400
Hot		220	425
Very Hot		230	450

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Authentic  
**Malay**  
COOKING

Meriam Ismail



This collection of recipes provides the opportunity to experience the flavours of authentic Malay cooking. Surprise your family and friends with dishes like Malay-style Fried Rice, Kelantan-style Laksa, Chicken Rendang, Rojak, and desserts like Serikaya, Akok, Tepung Pasung and many more.

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# Introduction

This collection of recipes provides the opportunity for young homemakers to appreciate and continue the tradition of Malay cooking. To Malaysians—it offers the experience of trying out various traditional Malay dishes. To cooks in the rest of the world—it gives a basic introduction to authentic Malay dishes in the hope that this may enrich their culinary skills.

Rice is the staple food in Malaysia. It comes in two types: plain or glutinous. Both types can be in the form of grain or powdered form. The powdered form is often used for making desserts. It is also used for making noodles. The plain grain type is for daily consumption served during meals, while the glutinous type is used for desserts and is often cooked by steaming. The method for cooking rice in this book is using the modern rice cooker. A procedure is also included for those who do not have electric rice cookers.

Many recipes in this book may also have some influence from other ethnic groups in Malaysia, such as the Chinese or the Indians. For example, many Malay communities in Kelantan and other parts of Malaysia eat rice vermicelli and tofu soup, a dish that of course originated with the Chinese community. Similarly, the Malays as well as other groups throughout the country consume spicy curries in their daily meals, an influence from Indian culture.

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# Essential Malay Ingredients



**Asam gelugur** is the Malay name for the sweet-sour garcinia fruit that resembles a dried apple. Dried slices of the fruit are used in place of tamarind pulp in some Malay and Nonya dishes.



**Banana leaves** infuse a delicate flavour and aroma to food and are used as wrappers when steaming or grilling dishes, or as little trays to hold food when cooking. Soften the leaves slightly in boiling water before use to prevent them from cracking when folded.



**Black prawn paste** (*hae koh*) is a black, pungent, molasses-like seasoning made of fermented prawns, salt, sugar, and thickeners. It is used as a sauce or a dip. It is sometimes labelled as *petis* and is unrelated to *belachan*.



**Candlenuts** are waxy and straw-coloured. They are ground to add texture and flavour to spice pastes and curry mixtures. Almonds, cashews or macadamia nuts may be substituted.



**Cardamom** is a highly aromatic pod containing tiny black seeds. If whole pods are used, they should be removed before serving. If seeds are called for, lightly smash the pods to remove the seeds. Ground cardamom is sold in packets or small tins.



Dried chillies

Bird's-eye chillies



Finger-length chillies

Chillies come in many sizes. Fresh green and red **finger-length chillies** are moderately hot. Tiny red, green or orange **bird's-eye chillies** (chilli padi) are very hot. **Dried chillies** are usually deseeded, cut into lengths and soaked in warm water to soften before use. **Chilli powder** is made from ground dried chillies. **Chilli paste** consists of ground fresh chillies, some times mixed with other ingredients such as vinegar, garlic or black beans and commonly sold in jars. You can make your own and store it in the refrigerator, or purchase ready-made chilli paste in Asian markets and well-stocked supermarkets.



**Cinnamon** is lighter in colour, thinner, and more expensive than cassia bark, which is often sold as cinnamon. Cassia has a stronger flavour than cinnamon, but makes an acceptable substitute. Do not use ground cinnamon as a substitute where cinnamon sticks are called for.



**Coconut milk** can be bought fresh from local wet markets and also available canned and in packets. They come in varying consistencies and you will need to adjust the thickness by adding water as needed. In general, you should add 1 cup (250 ml) of water to 1 cup (250 ml) of canned or packet coconut cream to obtain **thick coconut milk**, and 2 cups (500 ml) of water to 1 cup (250 ml) of coconut cream to obtain **thin coconut milk**.



**Coriander** is a pungent herb and spice plant that is essential in Southeast Asian cooking. It is widely available in supermarkets and can easily be grown at home. **Coriander leaves** are used as a herb and a garnish. They are sold in bunches, sometimes with the roots still attached. Small, round **coriander seeds** have a mild citrus fragrance. The seeds are used whole, or ground into a powder that is the basis for many curries and sauces.





Curry leaves are sold in sprigs containing 8–15 small, green leaves with a distinct fragrance and flavour used to make Indian curries. There is no substitute for curry leaves.



Curry powder is a commercial blend of spices that varies in colour and flavour. Different blends are available for cooking meat, fish or chicken dishes. Use an all-purpose blend if a specific curry powder is not available.



Cumin seeds are pale brown to black and usually combined with coriander seeds in basic spice mixes. They are often dry-roasted or lightly stir-fried in oil to intensify their flavour, which is often likened to liquorice.



Dried prawn paste or *belachan* is a dense mixture of fermented ground prawns that must be toasted before use—either wrapped in foil and dry-roasted or toasted over a gas flame on the back of a spoon.



Fennel seeds are larger and paler than cumin seeds, with a sweet flavour similar to that of anise.



Fenugreek seeds are small, flat and slightly squarish with a deep furrow. They are bitter, so use sparingly.



**Galangal** (*lengkuas*) is similar in appearance to ginger. It has a highly aromatic flavour that is used in curries.



**Laksa leaves** (*daun kesum*), also known as polygonum, is a fragrant herb that is traditionally added to laksa dishes. The spear-shaped leaves wilt quickly once they are plucked off the stem and have an intense fragrance reminiscent of lemon with a hint of eucalyptus. Substitute mint and coriander leaves.



**Lemongrass** is a lemon-scented stalk with a bulbous stem. Peel off the outer layers and only use the lower 8 cm (3 in) of the bulb to flavour sauces or stews.



**Mustard seeds** (*biji sawi*) are small, round and either brownish black or yellow in colour. Brown-black mustard seeds are used in southern Indian cuisines and impart a nutty flavour to dishes.



**Palm sugar** (*gula melaka*) is made from the sap of coconut or arenga palms. It comes in rectangular or cylindrical blocks and varies in colour from gold to light brown with a strong caramel taste. Substitute dark brown sugar or maple syrup.



**Pandanus leaves** are long, thin leaves used to impart a delicate fragrance and green hue to cakes and desserts. Substitute bottled pandanus essence or vanilla essence.



**Slaked lime** (*kapur sirih*) is a paste obtained by grinding sea shells in a little liquid. This is the lime which is chewed with betelnuts, gambier and tobacco. It is added to batters for fried foods and pastries to make the food crispy. Available at your local grocers or supermarkets.



**Star anise** is an eight-pointed dried tree pod encasing shiny black seeds with a strong aniseed flavour. The whole spice is used and discarded just before serving.



**Tamarind pulp** (*asam*) is the fruit of the tamarind tree seed pod. It is sold dried in packets or jars and generally still has some seeds and pulp fibres mixed in with the dried pulp. It is used as a souring agent in many Malaysian dishes. The dried pulp keeps indefinitely in an airtight container.



**Turmeric** (*kunyit*) is a root with a bright yellow flesh and a pungent flavour. It stains everything permanently, so scrub your knife blade, hands and chopping board after handling. Substitute 1 teaspoon of ground turmeric for 2.5 cm (1 in) of the fresh root.



**White vinegar** called for in the recipes in this book is the normal distilled vinegar sold in bottles in supermarkets. Some Malaysian cooks prefer rice vinegar or cider vinegar instead. Vinegar is used to make condiments or as a preservative and any type of vinegar may be substituted.



**Wild ginger buds** (*bunga kantan*) are the pink buds of wild ginger plants, also known as torch ginger. They are highly aromatic and lend a subtle but distinct fragrance to dishes of Malay and Nonya origin. Ginger buds are available in fresh markets and supermarkets.

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# Basic Recipes

## Satay Sauce

6–8 dried red chillies, deseeded, cut into short lengths and soaked to soften  
4 shallots  
2 cloves garlic  
2-cm (¾-in) galangal root  
½ teaspoon turmeric powder  
1 teaspoon coriander powder  
½ teaspoon cumin powder  
½ teaspoon fennel powder  
6 tablespoons oil  
350 g (2¼ cups) roasted peanuts, skins removed, coarsely ground  
3 candlenuts or macadamia nuts, coarsely ground  
¾ cups (800 ml) water  
1 stalk lemongrass, tender inner part of bottom third only, slightly bruised  
3 tablespoons Tamarind Juice (page 7)  
3 tablespoons shaved palm sugar or dark brown sugar  
1 tablespoon salt

**1** Grind the chillies, shallots, garlic, galangal, turmeric, coriander, cumin and fennel to a fine paste in a mortar or blender, adding a little water if necessary to keep the blades turning.

**2** Heat the oil in a frying pan. Fry the grounded spice paste over medium heat for 5 minutes until fragrant. Remove and set aside.

**3** Mix the ground peanuts and candlenuts in a saucepan. Add the water and lemongrass. Bring to a boil over medium heat, stirring constantly. Add the fried spice paste. Stir in the Tamarind Juice, palm sugar and salt. Keep stirring over medium-low heat until the oil in the mixture surfaces and the consistency of the mixture slightly thickens. Remove from the heat and serve as a dip with satay dishes.

## Toasted Grated Coconut (Kerisik)

200 g (2 cups) freshly grated coconut

**1** Dry-fry the grated coconut in a frying pan for about 10 minutes over low heat, stirring constantly until light golden brown. Set aside to cool.

**2** When cool enough to handle, pound the fried grated coconut with a mortar and pestle until fine. Store in an airtight container until ready for use.

## Crispy Fried Shallots

12 shallots  
1 cup (250 ml) oil

**1** Soak the shallots in salted water for 5 minutes, then peel and slice thinly. Pat dry the sliced shallots.

thoroughly with paper towels.

**2** Heat the oil in a frying pan and stir-fry the shallots over moderate heat until golden brown and crispy. Drain on paper towels and set aside to cool. Store in an airtight container. Keeps up to 2-weeks.

## Mixed Pickled Fruit Chutney (Acar Buah)

250 g (1¼ cups) shaved palm sugar or dark brown sugar

¾ cup (185 ml) water

¼ cup (60 ml) white vinegar

15 shallots thinly sliced

10 cloves garlic, thinly sliced

5 pieces (2.5-cm/1-in) ginger, thinly sliced

¾ cup (150 ml) oil, for frying

100 g (½ cup) chilli paste

2 tablespoons curry powder

Salt and sugar, to taste

80 g (¾ cup) sesame seeds, dry-roasted

1 tablespoon mustard seeds, dry-roasted

### Fruit

15 dried star fruit

6 pickled limes

10 Chinese dates or jujubes (unseeded)

5 pickled plums

5 unseeded preserved or dried prunes

1 tablespoon dried raisins

**1** Bring the palm sugar or dark brown sugar and water to a boil in a saucepan. Stir in the vinegar. Add the sliced shallots, garlic and ginger. Return to a boil, remove from the heat and set aside.

**2** Heat the oil in a frying pan over medium heat. Fry the chilli paste and curry powder for 3 minutes until fragrant. Add all the Fruit ingredients and stir.

**3** Pour in the palm sugar mixture, season to taste with salt and sugar. Cook for another 10 minutes. Add the sesame and mustard seeds.

**4** Remove from the heat and allow to cool thoroughly, then transfer to an airtight container and keep refrigerated.

## Tamarind Juice

1 tablespoon tamarind pulp

¼ cup (60 ml) warm water

**1** Soak the pulp in the warm water for 5 minutes.

**2** Mash well with your fingers and then strain through a sieve to obtain the juice. Discard any seeds and fibres.

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# Chicken Satay with Lontong

Satay, a common and popular Malay dish, is served with peanut gravy and *lontong* (compressed rice cakes), along with fresh vegetable slices. This dish can be served during high tea along with other dishes or it can be a starters for part of a bigger menu.

Cucumber slices, to serve  
Onion slices, to serve  
Satay Sauce (page 6), to dip

## Compressed Rice Cakes

500 g (2½ cups) uncooked white rice, washed in several changes of water, drained  
8¼ cups (2 litres) water  
Pinch of salt  
1 pandanus leaf (optional)  
Aluminium foil or banana leaves

## Satay

1 teaspoon cumin powder  
1 teaspoon fennel powder  
1 teaspoon chilli powder  
4 shallots, finely minced  
1 clove garlic, finely minced  
1 teaspoon salt  
1 tablespoon honey  
500 g (1 lb) boneless chicken or beef, sliced into 3 mm (⅛ in) x 2 cm (¾ in) pieces  
25–30 pieces of 15 cm–18 cm (6–7 in) satay skewers, soaked in water for 1 hour  
2 stalks lemongrass, for brushing  
Oil, for brushing

**1** Make the Compressed Rice Cakes by bringing the rice, water, salt and pandanus leaf, if using, to a boil in a big saucepan over medium heat. Reduce the heat to low when the mixture slightly thickens and the rice is cooked and soft. Keep stirring until the rice mixture thickens. Continue to stir until the rice mixture leaves the sides of the saucepan. Remove from the heat.

**2** Line the sides and bottom of a deep saucepan with the aluminium foil or banana leaves. Pour in the thickened rice mixture, cover the top of the rice mixture with more foil or banana leaves. Place a heavy object on top of the foil or banana leaves to compress the rice. Leave to stand overnight. When ready to serve, remove the banana leaves and cut the compressed rice into 12-mm (½-in) cubes.

**3** Make the Satay by mixing the cumin, fennel and chilli powders together with the shallots, garlic, salt and honey in a large bowl. Add the meat slices, mix to coat well and set aside to marinate for at least 3–4 hours.

**4** Thread 4–5 of the marinated meat slices onto each skewer until all the meat slices have been used up. Grill the meat over a charcoal grill or a barbecue set, constantly brushing with a stalk of lemongrass dipped in oil. Turn the skewers frequently to prevent the meat from burning.

**5** Serve the Satay accompanied by Compressed Rice Cakes, cucumber and onion slices, and a dipping bowl of Satay Sauce on the side.

Makes 20–30 sticks

Preparation time: **30 mins + marinating time**

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Cooking time: **2 hours + 20 mins**





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# Malay Curry Puffs

This is a very popular snack and is usually served for breakfast or afternoon tea.

Oil, for deep-frying

## Filling

2 tablespoons oil

1 onion, minced

5–6 curry leaves

1 tablespoon curry powder, mixed with 5 tablespoons water to form a paste

150 g (5 oz) minced beef or fresh beef, thinly sliced and pounded

2 medium sweet potatoes, peeled and finely diced

1 teaspoon salt

3 tablespoons water

## Pastry

$\frac{3}{8}$  cup (100 ml) oil

2½ tablespoons butter or margarine

500 g (3¼ cups) plain flour

$\frac{1}{2}$  teaspoon salt dissolved in  $\frac{1}{4}$  cup (60 ml) water

$\frac{1}{2}$  cup (125 ml) water

**1** Prepare the Filling by heating the oil in a saucepan. Fry the minced onion, add the curry leaves and curry powder paste and fry for 2–3 minutes, until fragrant. Add the beef and fry for another 3 minutes. Add the diced potatoes, salt and water. Cook until the Filling is dry but not burnt. Remove from the heat, transfer the Filling to a plate and allow to cool.

**2** Make the Pastry by heating the oil together with the butter in a saucepan over low heat. Remove from the heat just before the oil starts to boil.

**3** Sift the flour into a bowl. Make a well at the centre, and pour in the slightly warm oil. Use a wooden spoon to mix and combine well. Pour in the salted water, a little at a time while kneading the mixture into a dough. Add the  $\frac{1}{2}$  cup of water, a tablespoonful at a time, to combine the dough into a ball. Let the dough rest for half an hour.

**4** Roll the dough with a floured rolling pin to 3-mm ( $\frac{1}{8}$ -in) thickness. Cut the rolled dough into circles approximately 6–7 cm ( $2\frac{1}{4}$ – $2\frac{3}{4}$  in) in diameter.

**5** Place 1 teaspoon of the Filling onto the centre of each circle. Fold the dough over to form a crescent shape and press the edges together to seal. Crimp and roll the edges to form a simple wave pattern, sealing the package well. Continue this process until all the dough and Filling have been used up.

**6** Heat the oil in a large wok or frying pan over medium heat and fry the curry puffs until golden. Alternatively, you may bake the curry puffs at 200°C (400°F) for 12 minutes.

Chicken meat can be used instead of beef.

Not all types of margarine are suitable to make the Pastry because of their high moisture content. The Malaysian brand, Plantina, is recommended while Crisco is a suitable substitute.

Makes 40–50 pcs

Preparation time: **45 mins**

Cooking time: **20 mins**

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Place 1 teaspoon of the Filling onto the centre of each dough circle.



Decorate by fluting the edges with your fingers or pressing it down with a fork.

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# Nasi Lemak (Rice in Coconut Milk)

This breakfast meal is popular throughout Malaysia. It is traditionally wrapped in banana leaves and sold in many food stalls, Malay and Indian Muslim restaurants. The Spicy Baby Anchovies and egg provide protein. Fresh vegetables such as cucumber or tomato slices complete the meal.

2 hardboiled eggs, cut into halves, to serve  
Freshly sliced cucumber and tomato, to garnish

## Nasi Lemak

2¾ cups (650 ml) thin coconut milk  
500 g (2½ cups) uncooked white rice, washed and drained  
2-cm (¾-in) ginger, finely sliced into thin shreds  
5 shallots, thinly sliced  
1 teaspoon salt  
1 pandanus leaf, tied into a knot

## Spicy Baby Anchovies

12 tablespoons oil  
300 g (10 oz) dried baby anchovies (*ikan bilis*), heads removed, washed and drained or 300 g (10 oz) medium fresh prawns, shells removed and deveined  
10–15 dried red chillies, deseeded, cut into short lengths, soaked to soften  
5 shallots  
3 cloves garlic  
2 tablespoons Tamarind Juice (page 7)  
¾ cup (200 ml) thick coconut milk  
2 tablespoons sugar  
1 teaspoon salt, to taste

**1** Make the Nasi Lemak by combining the coconut milk and rice in the rice cooker. Add the shredded ginger, shallots and salt. Stir to mix well. Add the pandanus leaf. Cover and cook as you would normally cook rice. If you do not have a rice cooker, bring the washed rice and coconut milk to a boil with the other ingredients in an uncovered saucepan over moderately high heat. Reduce the heat once the liquid begins to evaporate, cover the saucepan and cook for another 5 minutes.

**2** To make the Spicy Baby Anchovies, heat 8 tablespoons of the oil in a wok over medium heat and fry the anchovies lightly until they turn a soft light brown. Remove with a slotted spoon and set aside to drain on a rack lined with paper towels. If using fresh prawns, cook until the prawns change colour and then remove and drain.

**3** Grind the dried chillies, shallots and garlic into a fine paste in a mortar or blender, adding a little water if necessary to keep the blades turning. Heat the remaining 4 tablespoons of oil in a separate pan, add the ground paste and fry for 3 minutes until fragrant. Add the Tamarind Juice, thick coconut milk, sugar and salt. Stir to mix well. Return the fried anchovies to the pan. Cook for a further 5 minutes until the mixture is of a thick consistency.

**4** Remove from the heat and serve with the Nasi Lemak and the egg halves, and a plate of sliced cucumber and tomato on the side.

Serves 4-6

Preparation time: **25 mins**

Cooking time: **45 min**



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# Turmeric Rice with Spicy Gravy and Herb Salad

This rice dish, known as *nasi kerabu*, is very popular among the Kelantan Malays. The food stalls serve this dish wrapped in banana leaves. The assortment of herb salad served fresh with the rice provides a wealth of natural nutrients.

500 g (2½ cups) uncooked white rice, washed and drained

2¾ cups (650 ml) water

2-cm (¾-in) turmeric root

2 tablespoons water

½ teaspoon salt

1 knotted pandanus leaf

## Spicy Gravy

6–8 dried red chillies, de-seeded, cut into short lengths, soaked to soften

1-cm (½-in) galangal root

1-cm (½-in) ginger

2 cloves garlic

5 shallots

1 tablespoon dried prawn paste (*belachan*), dry-roasted

3 tablespoons oil

2 stalks lemongrass, tender inner part of bottom third only, bruised

3 tablespoons Tamarind Juice (page 7)

1¾ cups (450 ml) thin coconut milk

1½ tablespoons shaved palm sugar or dark brown sugar

1 teaspoon salt

## Herb Salad

1 small cucumber

3 stalks laksa leaves (*daun kesum*), thinly sliced, stalks discarded

1 wild ginger bud (*bunga kantan*), thinly sliced

2 stalks lemongrass, tender inner part of bottom third only, thinly sliced

4 long beans or 10 green beans, thinly sliced lengthwise

**1** Place the rice and water in a rice cooker. Pound the turmeric with a mortar and pestle until fine. Add 2 tablespoons of water to the turmeric. Strain to obtain the juice. Add the juice to the rice, set aside for 1–2 hours to allow the yellow turmeric juice to stain the rice. Add the salt and pandanus leaf. Cover and cook as you would normal rice. If you do not have a rice cooker, place the rice mixture in an uncovered saucepan and bring to a boil over moderately high heat. Reduce the heat when the liquid has evaporated, cover the saucepan and cook for another 5 minutes.

**2** Make the Spicy Gravy by grinding the chillies, galangal, ginger, garlic, shallots and dried prawn paste into a fine paste in a mortar or blender, adding a little water if necessary to keep the blades turning. Heat the oil in a pan over medium heat. Fry the ground paste until fragrant, about 5 minutes. Add the lemongrass and continue frying for a few more seconds. Stir in the Tamarind Juice and coconut milk. Reduce the heat and cook, constantly stirring until the gravy thickens. Season with the sugar and salt. Stir well and turn off the heat. Serve the gravy in a bowl with the rice.

3 Prepare the Herb Salad by peeling the cucumber. Thinly slice round the cucumber and roll in the th rolls and slice these again finely. Divide all the herbs into separate serving bowls and serve with th rice and Spicy Gravy. Serve with Grilled Chicken in Coconut Milk (page 26), Roasted Turmeric Be (page 37) and Grilled Fish with Grated Coconut (page 51).

Serves 4–6

Preparation time: **25 mins**

Cooking time: **45 mins**



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# Nasi Dagang (Trader's Rice)

This dish originates from Kelantan and Trengganu. The Trengganu version uses a variety of soft white rice, whereas in Kelantan, and in this recipe, the red-speckled glutinous rice is preferred. Traders used to pack this rice dish with them on their business trips, hence its name.

500 g (2½ cups) uncooked red glutinous rice (see note), washed and soaked for 6 hours or overnight, drained  
¾ cup (200 ml) thick coconut milk  
1 teaspoon salt  
1 teaspoon sugar  
1 teaspoon fenugreek seeds  
5 shallots, sliced  
2-cm (¾-in) ginger, sliced  
1¼ cups (300 ml) thin coconut milk

## Pickled Vegetables

1 carrot, peeled and sliced into matchsticks  
1 cucumber, skin intact, core removed, sliced into matchsticks,  
50 g (¾ cup) finely shredded cabbage  
1 teaspoon salt  
1½ tablespoons sugar  
5 tablespoons hot water  
1 tablespoon white vinegar  
1 red and 1 green finger-length chilli, deseeded and finely sliced  
3 shallots, thinly sliced

**1** To make the Pickled Vegetables, place all the sliced vegetables in a large bowl. Dissolve the salt and sugar in the hot water in a separate bowl. Add the vinegar, sliced chillies and shallots. Stir well to combine. Pour the vinegar mixture over the sliced vegetables and mix well. Allow to stand before serving.

**2** Line a steamer with a cheesecloth, spread the rice evenly on top and steam for half an hour over medium heat.

**3** Combine the thick coconut milk with the salt, sugar, fenugreek seeds, sliced shallots and ginger in a large bowl. Mix well and set aside.

**4** Transfer the half cooked rice from the steamer into a heatproof container. Stir in the thin coconut milk, mix well and steam for another 30 minutes.

**5** Remove the heatproof container from the steamer and pour the thick coconut milk mixture over the steamed rice. Stir to mix well and steam for another 30 minutes or until cooked. Remove from the heat and serve with the Pickled Vegetables, Grilled Fish (page 44) and Prawn Kerutuk (page 45).

A special red glutinous rice, available in the east coast of Peninsular Malaysia, is normally used for this dish. If unavailable, use 1¼ cups (250 g) long-grain white rice mixed with 1¼ cups (250 g) glutinous white rice, omit the soaking step, rinse and steam directly.

Serve 4–6

Preparation time: **30 mins**

Cooking time: 2 hours





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