

Just like the documentary "Help I've Gone Viral" celebrates the unifying power of music and food, this recipe for "Gulai Ikan" is about to make your taste buds dance with joy. It's the perfect accompaniment to tales of viral stardom, blending the exotic flavors of Indonesia with a touch of Norwegian finesse. Let's dive into this delectable dish that's as easy to make as it is to love!

Homemade Purée, Padang-Style (Simplified for ease):

- 8 small shallots or 4 regular-sized, peeled
- 2 fresh chili peppers (adjust according to your spice preference)
- 8 cloves of garlic, peeled
- 1 can of Mutti canned tomatoes (or another brand)
- 1 ginger piece (about 4-5 cm), peeled and thinly sliced
- 6 tbsp fish sauce
- 2 tbsp ground turmeric
- 6 tbsp lemongrass, finely chopped
- 3 tbsp ground coriander
- 3 tbsp tamarind paste (available at most Asian grocery stores)
- 4 candlenuts or macadamia nuts (substitute with other nuts if preferred)
- 1 tbsp ground black pepper
- Salt to taste
- 2 tbsp water

Blend the purée ingredients in a food processor until smooth to make a fragrant paste. Set aside for later use.

Other Ingredients:

- About 1 kg of filleted fish, such as Snapper (common in Padang) or fresh Norwegian cod, which works beautifully.
- 2 tsp. fresh lime juice
- 3 tbsp. canola oil
- 3 fresh or frozen kaffir lime leaves
- 1-10 small whole chilies (added whole to the pot for flavor)
- 2 stalks of lemongrass, trimmed and crushed
- 3 bay leaves
- 1 ½ cup coconut milk
- 3 tbsp. coconut cream
- 1 tbsp sugar
- Salt, to taste
- Jasmine rice for serving

Instructions:

1. Marinate the cod with lime juice and a pinch of salt; let it rest for about 10 minutes.
2. Heat oil in a pan over medium-high heat. Sauté the lemongrass and lime leaves for about a minute to release their aroma.
3. Stir in the purée, whole chilies, lemongrass, and bay leaves. Cook while stirring for 3-4 minutes.
4. Mix in coconut milk and 1.5 cups of water. Bring to a boil, then reduce the heat to medium.
5. Let it simmer, stirring occasionally, for 5 minutes.
6. Lower the heat slightly, add the cod, and let it poach until it's cooked through but still holds together, about 5-10 minutes.
7. Stir in coconut cream, sugar, and salt to taste.
8. Serve the fragrant "Gulai Ikan" with fluffy jasmine rice on the side.

Now, you're all set to create a viral sensation in your very own kitchen! Just like the documentary showcases an unexpected hit, your "Gulai Ikan" might just become the new favorite on your menu. Bon Appétit or as we say in Norwegian, Vel bekomme!

Here are some additional tips and cultural tidbits that could enrich the experience of cooking and enjoying "Gulai Ikan":

Preparation Tips:

1. **Pre-soak Ingredients:** Some ingredients like candlenuts and dried tamarind might benefit from being soaked in water beforehand to soften them, making them easier to blend into a smooth paste.
2. **Balance the Flavors:** Indonesian cooking is all about balance. Taste as you go and adjust the levels of sour (lime juice), sweet (sugar), salty (fish sauce), and umami (fermented elements like fish sauce or shrimp paste) to achieve a harmonious flavor profile.
3. **Use a Mortar and Pestle:** If you want to get traditional, use a mortar and pestle to grind your purée. This method is believed to release more flavor than a food processor.
4. **Garnish:** Before serving, garnish with fresh cilantro or Thai basil leaves and a few slices of red chili for an extra pop of color and freshness.

Cultural Tidbits:

1. **Community Cooking:** In Indonesia, preparing and cooking meals is often a communal activity, particularly for more complex dishes like "Gulai". Consider turning your cooking experience into a social event by inviting friends or family to join in the preparation.
2. **Serving Tradition:** Indonesians typically eat "Gulai" with their hands, using rice to scoop up the fish and sauce. Of course, this might be a step too far for some, but it can be a fun and authentic way to enjoy the meal.
3. **Culinary Diversity:** Indonesia is known for its vast culinary diversity. Each region has its own version of "Gulai", influenced by local ingredients and traditions. Feel free to adapt the recipe to include local ingredients that you love or want to try out.
4. **The Role of Rice:** Rice isn't just a side in Indonesian meals; it's considered the main event. The "Gulai" is seen as a complement to the rice, so make sure your jasmine rice is perfectly cooked to respect its central role in the meal.
5. **The Spice Trade:** Historically, Indonesia was at the heart of the spice trade, a fact that deeply influenced its cuisine. The use of spices like turmeric, coriander, and tamarind in "Gulai Ikan" reflects this rich history.

By incorporating these preparation tips and cultural insights, not only will you create a delicious "Gulai Ikan", but you'll also add depth to the dining experience, celebrating the rich traditions that make Indonesian cuisine so wonderfully unique.