



Local favourites on-the-go

Nasi lemak, turmeric fried chicken and sambal udang petai are great picnic food

THE men have gone fishing again, taking advantage of a recent long weekend. It does make the house more peaceful than usual and it seemed like a good time to brush up on some long neglected recipes like *nasi lemak*, a firm family favourite for three generations.

It's a relatively easy dish to put together and I've fine-tuned the accompanying dishes to save time and calories. I also used the rice cooker.

The secret to a good *nasi lemak* is in the rice, and in the *sambal*.

My grandmother used to steam the rice on a bed of carefully flattened pandan leaves. These days, I put everything in the rice cooker – salt, cinnamon, pandan leaves and coconut milk. Comes out perfect every time, and I don't have to stand

over the steamer poking holes in the rice for the coconut milk to be absorbed.

The *sambal* used to be the killer. Being the youngest kitchen apprentice, I would have to squat over the pestle and mortar pounding tear-inducing onions, garlic and chillies until they were fine enough to pass the "granny" test.

I use the blender now, whizzing together the ingredients in five minutes flat. But there are still steps you cannot cheat on. And that's standing over the wok stirring the *sambal* until it's nice and red and the oil has surfaced once again.

The *sambal* is then halved, with one portion going into the prawn *sambal* with *petai* beans. I keep the other half for those who want more heat with their rice.

Okay, one word about *petai*. These "smelly" beans are good anti-oxidants and I love them. But if you don't find their pungency friendly, just sub-

stitute with french beans or long beans. It's all about adapting recipes to your own taste.

The fried chicken and little *kuning* fishes are first marinated in salt and turmeric powder and then dipped into a flavoured flour before being deep fried.

I simply use salt and pepper to season the flour, but added some black sesame seeds to make the batter more interesting.

Finally, the long beans are quickly fried with pounded dried prawns. Add a spoonful of the *sambal* if you prefer a spicy vegetable.

This set of dishes is good picnic food and very portable. Pack them into containers and send them along with the boys to the fishing pond. It'll keep them happy whether the fish are biting or not. Be sure to keep the food cool or the *nasi lemak* could get rancid in the heat.

Don't forget fresh, cool cucumber slices!



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Sambal Udang Petai

Ingredients:

500 gm tiger prawns
1 400 gm packet *petai*
10 large red onions and 5 cloves garlic
10 dried chillies, washed
3 tablespoons sugar, 1 teaspoon salt
Oil for frying

Method:

- Blend onions, garlic and chilli together till fine. Put 3 tablespoon oil in non-stick wok, and stir fry paste till fragrant. Add sugar and salt and fry till *sambal* turns a dark red.
- Keep half aside. Add prawns and *petai*. Fry till prawns turn pink and are fully cooked.



Turmeric Fried Chicken and Ikan Kuning

Marinade:

4 whole chicken legs, cut into pieces
12 *kuning* fishes
1 teaspoon each salt and pepper
1 teaspoon turmeric powder

Seasoned flour:

100 gm plain flour plus 2 tbsp cornflour
2 teaspoon black sesame seeds
salt and pepper, oil for frying

Method:

- Marinate chicken and fish with turmeric powder, salt and pepper.



- Dip chicken pieces into seasoned flour and shake off excess. Deep fry four minutes each side, taking care not to burn chicken.
- Deep fry fish using the same method.

Nasi Lemak

Ingredients:

500 gm rice (4 cups)
Milk from 1 coconut milk (add 1 teasp salt)
3 pandan leaves, 2 small pieces cinnamon

Method:

- Wash rice, add two cups water and make up liquid with coconut milk.
- Put rest of ingredients into rice cooker with rice. Stir well and leave to cook.
- When rice is cooked, fluff up with fork.



Kacang Panjang

Ingredients:

200 gm dried prawns, pounded
1 bunch long beans, trimmed and cut
1 teaspoon sambal (optional)

Method:

- Wash long beans or kacang panjang.
- Stir fry pounded dried prawns in a little oil until fragrant. Add long beans and stir fry till beans change colour.
- Add a little water to the wok and continue to cook beans.
- Add the sambal (optional).
- When beans are a deep green, they are ready.