

Grilled Scallop on Thai-currried Butternut Squash Puree with Sweet Potato Crisps

What a truly orgasmic dish! This might seem like a lot of hard work but it really is well worth it.

Ingredients

- 1 large butternut squash
- 500ml vegetable oil
- 1 large sweet potato
- 2 red peppers, quartered, seeds and stem removed
- 3 red chillies, halved lengthways, stem removed
- 6 cloves garlic, sliced fine
- 200g ginger, peeled and finely sliced
- 100g galangal, peeled and finely sliced
- 5 lime leaves
- 2 lemongrass stems, outer two layers removed, then finely sliced
- 50g palm sugar
- 12 large scallops
- a handful of chopped parsley
- a handful of mizuna leaves

Method

- Preheat the oven to 200C.
- Place the squash on a baking tray and roast for 45minutes to 1 hour, until cooked and the skin has darkened.
- Meanwhile, peel the sweet potato, then using a vegetable peeler, peel thin strips of potato until you have a pile of ribbons.
- Heat the vegetable oil up in a wok to 170C and fry ribbons in small batches until crisp and golden, then drain well on kitchen paper, salt lightly and reserve.
- Turn the oil up to 180C and add the 8 pepper quarters and fry until darkened and softened, remove and drain; cook the chillies the same way, drain; cook the garlic, then the ginger and galangal all in the same way, cooking only one ingredient at a time.
- Place all of the fried ingredients (other than the sweet potato crisps) in a food processor and whizz to a fine paste with the lime leaves and lemongrass.
- Scoop out into a jar and reserve.
- Once the squash is cooked remove it from the oven and cut in half lengthways, scoop out the seeds and discard, then scoop the flesh from the skin and place in the same food processor.

- Add the palm sugar, a tsp of salt and half the paste, blitz to a fine purée and taste for seasoning - add more curry paste if desired.
- Lightly oil the scallops and place on a very hot griddle/skillet/ frying pan.
- Cook for 60 seconds each side to get them just beyond rare and leave to rest in a warm place for a few minutes.

Assembly

- Make three neat piles of the butternut squash puree onto each of four warmed plates.
- Place 1 scallop onto each pile of puree and make a neat pile of sweet potato crisps onto each plate.
- Finish with the parsley and a pinch of salt.

Recommended drinks

- Try a good Australian Semillion Chardonnay, Riesling, Gewürztraminer or even a zingy Sauvignon Blanc.
- And whatever you do, steer away from red wine.

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