

SHRIMP LAKSA

One of my favorite Singaporean treats is a steaming bowl of Laksa. It's a spicy noodle soup that is made throughout Southeast Asia with each country having it's own spin on it. People will argue for hours over which version is the best, but my vote always goes to this classic Singaporean recipe.

To make it completely from scratch is quite a commitment, particularly since many ingredients can only be found in Asian markets or on-line. So my version has a few key cheats that will guarantee the flavor without losing too much authenticity, as well as saving you some time in the kitchen.

INGREDIENTS – serves 6

(Most of the unusual ingredients can be found in an Asian market or on-line)

2 Tablespoons *Better Than Bouillon* Lobster base

6 cups water

2 tablespoons cooking oil

1 7-oz jar of laksa paste

1 tablespoon sugar

1 tablespoon fish sauce

1 14-oz can of coconut milk

18 large shrimp, tails on, deveined

18 fish balls

6 tofu puffs, tau pok, halved

1 lb vermicelli rice noodles, cooked per package instructions

1/2 cup bean sprouts

3 tablespoons chopped scallions

3 tablespoons dried shallots

1 Serrano chili, sliced thinly (optional)

PREPARATION

Bring 6 cups of water to a boil. Add two tablespoons of bouillon base and dissolve. Lower to simmer for five minutes. *(NOTE: the bouillon is very salty, so no need to add any additional salt to dish.)*

Heat 2 tablespoons of cooking oil in a large saucepan. Add the laksa paste and cook for 5 minutes on low heat. Add sugar, fish sauce, coconut milk, and stock stirring to combine. Simmer the mixture for 15 minutes then add the shrimp, fishballs, and tofu puffs, cooking for 5 minutes to finish.

To serve, add cooked vermicelli noodles to bowls. Ladle in laksa, dividing the shrimp, fish balls, and tofu puffs between 6 bowls. Garnish with bean sprouts, scallions, and dried shallots. For a little extra kick, garnish with sliced chili.

Enjoy!