

THAI-STYLE CURRY COCONUT MUSSELS WITH SPINACH **by radish*rose**

Ingredients:

2 lb. mussels, soaked and cleaned per instructions below
2 T. coconut oil
1 shallot, minced
3 cloves garlic, pressed
2 T. Thai curry paste (I used green, but you could also use red)
1 15-oz can light coconut milk
2 T. fish sauce (nam pla)
Zest + juice of 1 lime
5 oz. baby spinach

Optional for garnish: sliced green onions and/or chopped fresh cilantro

Optional for serving: steamed jasmine rice

Equipment: Large pot with a lid to steam the mussels (I use a 5-qt. cast iron pot)

Method:

To clean the mussels: Discard any cracked or dodgy looking ones, then soak in a bucket or sink full of cold water for about 2 hours, with 3-4 changes of water. (My research said you should consider discarding any open ones, but sometimes they are all open a little bit, and you'll see they open and close by themselves while soaking, so use your judgment and sniff them if you have any doubts. Good ones smell like the ocean and bad ones will smell, well, bad.) The soaking in fresh water makes them discharge sand and dirt. When you are changing the water, lift the mussels out of the water first. Do not pour all through a colander or you will just be pouring the sand and dirt back over them. After soaking, scrub the mussels with a brush, and remove any "beards" which are stringy things you can just pull off.

To make the broth base: Melt coconut oil in pot large enough to hold mussels. Saute shallot + garlic till fragrant. Add curry paste and saute until fragrant (this step "blooms" the spices... smells so good), then add coconut milk and fish sauce and stir to combine (you can whisk in the curry paste to make it smooth, if needed). Bring to a boil.

To steam the mussels: Once your curry-coconut broth has come to a boil, add your cleaned mussels, cover with the lid, and steam for 5-6 minutes. Check to see if the mussels have all opened up and if not, put the lid back on and steam for a couple more minutes. Turn off the heat. Quickly add the spinach, lime zest, and lime juice, and pop the lid back on. Let sit for 3-4 minutes to allow the spinach to wilt. Stir all together, making sure to get some of the curry broth over each mussel. Serve in large bowls (with another large bowl out to hold empty shells). Garnish with sliced green onions and/or chopped cilantro (optional). I like to serve this with jasmine rice because as I mentioned above, after you're done eating the mussels, you can dip or add the rice into the broth and eat it like soup! Yum!

Original post: <http://radishrose.net/2014/06/18/thai-style-curry-coconut-mussels-with-lime-and-spinach>

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