



HOT SMOKED RED EMPEROR AND PINK POMELO MIANG WITH CHILLI, GREEN PAPAYA RELISH AND YARRA VALLEY SALMON CAVIAR

Recipe from Nu Nu, Cairns

Serves 4

Ingredients:

12 betel leaves (also known as wild pepper leaves)
120g picked, hot smoked red emperor wings
4tbsp green papaya, shredded into fine threads
2 small green chillies (scuds), sliced into fine rounds
2 long red chillies, sliced into fine threads
12 tsp pink pomelo flesh
24 coriander leaves
3 kaffir lime leaves, very finely sliced
2 limes
6 tbsp miang paste
12 tsp crispy fried shallots
12 slices of crispy fried garlic
1 tsp Thai basil flowers
4 tsp Yarra Valley salmon caviar

Miang paste

200ml water
500g pale palm sugar
30g shelled peanuts
10g galangal, peeled and grated
15g hot smoked red emperor
60g freshly grated coconut
2 small green chillies
2 cloves garlic
3-4 tbsp fish sauce
3-4 tbsp tamarind water (about ¼ of a packet massaged with the same volume of water and strained)

Slowly melt the palm sugar and water together in a pot with the lid on. Roast the peanuts, galangal, red emperor and coconut until fragrant at about 160C. With a mortar and pestle pound the garlic, chillies with a little salt until smooth. Add the roasted ingredients and continue to pound until a fine paste is achieved. Introduce this paste to the hot palm sugar with the fish sauce and simmer until rich, thick and highly perfumed. Once the caramel has a lustrous dark shine to it remove from the heat and stir in the tamarind water. Taste for seasoning. The miang paste should taste decadent and balanced. Too sweet. Too salty. Too sour. And yet just right. Add more fish sauce, tamarind or sugar as your personal tastes dictate.

In a bowl carefully combine the red emperor with the required quantity of miang paste until evenly coated. Add the green papaya and chillies and gently toss together. Add the pomelo, coriander and kaffir lime leaf and massage lightly with your fingertips. Squeeze in half of the lime juice and taste for seasoning. It should taste spicy, sweet, salty and sour all at once. Add more lime juice or extra chillies if desired. Spread the betel leaves out across your work surface and top each with an elegant pile of salad. Sprinkle over the crispy fried shallots, caviar, garlic chips and finally the Thai basil flowers and serve immediately. Eat with your hands by wrapping the leaf around the salad and offer finger bowls with a slice of lemon in each to refresh between bites.