

Speedy Thai Basil Chicken

Serves 4

I enjoy using authentic ingredients for Szechuan, Thai, Vietnamese food. Problem is, you can't always find the ingredients! For this dish, I took a traditional recipe, leaned it up, and made substitutions with more common ingredients.

2 tablespoons canola oil	2 Tablespoons lime
4 garlic cloves chopped	2 teaspoons agave nectar (or 1 teaspoon sugar)
1 large shallot sliced thin	1-2 large brunches of Thai basil leaves (or equal parts basil and mint)
2 - 3 Thai chiles chopped	1 large red pepper diced
12 ounces ground chicken	
2 Tablespoons soy sauce	

Directions:

1. Add oil, garlic, shallots and chiles in a cold sauté pan. Turn heat to medium high.

THAI BIRD CHILIS are HOT! 2 – 4 times hotter than Jalepeno. The heat is from the seeds, so you can always take a little out.

2. When the garlic is lightly golden, add the ground meat.

Ground Chicken is typically a mixture of chicken breast and thigh meat. You might want use ground chicken breast, It is drier, though, so you may end up using more oil. This ground chicken is equal to a 90/10 lean ground beef.

- 2B. Sauté and cook until completely browned and the liquid is absorbed.

In the traditional recipe we would use something called **Fish Sauce**, a very popular condiment in Thai cooking. Not everyone has fish sauce, so I've made a substitution using a blend of soy sauce and lime. It's not perfect, but it's close.

3. Add soy sauce, lime and agave nectar. Stir until liquids are almost all absorbed.

Everyone should have agave nectar. Healthy sweetener with a low glycemic index. If you don't have it, use a little sugar.

4. Add the Thai basil leaves.

If you have the luck of finding purple basil, also known as holy basil (Earthy, licorice fragrance), that's great. Otherwise, there is more common Thai basil (with a lighter, licoricy flavor).

5. Stir quickly until basil is wilted
6. Add the red pepper and serve on rice with a green vegetable

Recipe courtesy of Christina Dimacali, Clean Your Plate Chef Services and Cooking Instruction