Sauces / Thailand

# Thai Peanut Sauce

A creamy, coconut-enriched peanut satay sauce balanced on the tightrope between sweet palm sugar, sour tamarind, salty fish sauce, and the slow burn of red chili — nutty and rich enough to cling to a skewer, bright enough to cut through the char.

**Time** 30 min **Servings** 4

## What you'll need.

- ☐ 100 parts Smooth natural peanut butter (or freshly ground roasted peanuts)
- ☐ 80 parts Coconut milk (full-fat)
- ☐ 20 parts Palm sugar (shaved or grated)
- ☐ 15 parts Fish sauce
- ☐ 15 parts Fresh lime juice
- ☐ 20 parts Thai red curry paste
- ☐ 6 parts Garlic (minced to a paste)
- ☐ 10 parts Crushed roasted peanuts & sliced red chili

## Let's make it.

**01** Pour half the coconut milk into a small saucepan over medium heat. Add the red curry paste and garlic and cook, stirring constantly, for 2 to 3 minutes until the paste is fragrant and the oil in the paste begins to separate as tiny slicks at the edge of the pan. This brief frying step — even in coconut milk rather than oil — cooks out the raw smell of dried spice and wakes up the aromatics. The smell shifts from raw and harsh to warm and toasty.

**02** Whisk in the peanut butter and the remaining coconut milk, stirring until completely smooth and uniform. Bring to a gentle simmer over medium-low heat, whisking steadily. The sauce will thicken considerably as the peanut proteins cook and the coconut milk reduces; if it tightens past a slow-flowing consistency, thin with a splash of water or coconut milk. Cook 5 to 8 minutes until the raw peanut taste mellow into a roasted, nutty depth.

**03** Off the heat, stir in the palm sugar until dissolved, then add the fish sauce and lime juice. Taste and adjust: this sauce should hit sweet first, then the savory-salty fish sauce depth, then bright lime, with the heat building slowly at the back. Tune each element in small doses — a teaspoon of lime lifts more than you'd expect, a few drops of fish sauce deepens without pushing it salty. Add water if needed to reach a consistency that clings to a skewer but flows off a spoon. Pour into a bowl, scatter with crushed peanuts and sliced chili, and serve warm.

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Servings are an estimate; check quantities in the source recipe.
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