



TOM KHA GAI

SERVINGS: 4 ACTIVE TIME: 15 mins TOTAL TIME: 35 mins

Tom Kha Gai soup is a classic staple found in Thai cuisine. While it is traditionally made with galangal and kafir lime leaves, this recipe has been adapted to include ingredients more easily found in American grocery stores. Tom Kha is a beautifully complex and light soup that will excite your taste buds, leaving you wondering what exactly makes it taste so good right up until you reach the bottom of the bowl.

Ingredients

- > 2 stalks fresh lemongrass
- > 1 2 inch piece of ginger
- > 2 limes
- > 6 cups chicken stock
- > 1 teaspoon red chile flakes
- > 7 oz. oyster mushrooms
- > 3 shallots
- > 2 tablespoons fish sauce
- > 1 13.5 oz can unsweetened coconut milk
- > 1 lb shrimp, peeled and deveined
- > 1/4 cup cilantro leaves

Directions

1. To make Tom Kha soup, begin by trimming off the root end and top leaves from the lemongrass stalks and then use the back of a chef's knife to smash the lemongrass to soften the tough, outer layers. Cut the lemongrass into thirds and then cut the pieces in half vertically. Remove the outer layer of each piece and discard. Cut the ginger into thin rounds. Do not worry about peeling it as we will be straining the broth later. Set one lime aside to be used in a future step and then zest the other one.
2. Combine the chicken stock, lemongrass, ginger, lime zest and red chile flakes into a large sauce pot over high heat. Cut the recently zested lime in half and then squeeze the juice of the entire lime into the sauce pot as well. Bring to a boil. Cover and reduce heat to a simmer and then let cook for 10 minutes to allow the flavors to develop.
3. While the broth is heating up, prep the oyster mushrooms and shallots. Trim away the large root end of the oyster mushrooms and save only the caps and tender stems. Tear any large caps in half. Trim the ends of the shallots and then cut them in half. Peel the shallots and then cut them in thin half circles. Set aside with the mushrooms.

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Shopping List

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|--|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> 2 stalks fresh lemongrass | <input type="checkbox"/> red chile flakes | <input type="checkbox"/> A 13.5 oz can unsweetened coconut milk |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1 2" piece of ginger | <input type="checkbox"/> 7 oz. oyster mushrooms | <input type="checkbox"/> 1 lb shrimp, peeled and deveined |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 2 limes | <input type="checkbox"/> 3 shallots | <input type="checkbox"/> cilantro |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 6 cups chicken stock | <input type="checkbox"/> fish sauce | |

4. After the broth has simmered for ten minutes, place a large fine mesh sieve over a mixing bowl large enough to hold the liquid and strain the broth. Discard the solids. Wipe out any large pieces from the sauce pot that may have stuck to the side and return the broth to the pot. Bring the liquid back to a simmer and then add the mushrooms and shallots. Cover and allow to simmer for another 15 minutes or until the mushrooms have softened.
5. While the soup is simmering, open the can of coconut milk and clean the shrimp, removing both the shells and the “vein” that runs along the spine of the shrimp. While it doesn’t look as nice, it is easier to eat the soup if you cut the shrimp in half. If you want to do that, I would recommend doing it now.
6. After the broth has simmered for the 15 minutes mentioned in step 4, stir in the coconut milk, fish sauce and the juice from the reserved lime from before. Taste the soup and add salt as necessary. Allow the broth to recover back to a simmer and then finally add the shrimp. Allow the shrimp to cook for one minute and then remove the pot from the heat. Allow the soup to stand for five minutes to slightly cool and to let the shrimp gently finish cooking.
7. Divide the soup among four bowls and garnish with cilantro. For any guest looking for an extra kick, Thai red pepper oil is a great addition.



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