

Jonathan's Spiced Fish and Veggie Dish

This last recipe is a variation on a fusion recipe I found. It is so good, you'll find yourself making it over and over if you have the time. However, you have to mix up a tamarind ketchup. You can do this several different ways, depending on how you feel about working with tamarind. You need to end up with 1/2 cup of reduced tamarind pulp. The easiest way is to buy tamarind paste and thin it with a bit of water - probably what I would do. You can also use tamarind powder and boil it with enough water to make about 1 cup, reducing it down to 1/2 cup. Or you can prepare your own tamarind pulp from fresh pods and reduce it down until it is a thick paste making 1/2 cup. At any rate, to your half cup of tamarind paste, add a finely chopped red thai chile, 1 garlic clove minced to a paste, 1 T nam pla (fish sauce), 1 T sugar. Mix until the sugar dissolves and allow the sauce to develop flavor by sitting while you make everything else. Or make it in advance. It keeps a really long time in the fridge. The finished ketchup should be tart, a bit spicy, a bit sweet, with a sharp tang up front. Here's the fish recipe that utilizes this delicious ketchup and some of your equally delicious veggies. If you are not a fan of black pepper, use half or even less in making your butternut squash. But remember, pepper is the original aphrodisiac, and love could be in the air after you eat this dish!

- 1 small onion, sliced thinly
- 1 medium head cabbage, chopped or shredded
- 1 red chile, halved
- 1/4 c tamarind ketchup
- 1/3 c honey
- 4 t soy sauce
- 2 T nam pla (fish sauce)
- 1 T chili sauce like sriracha
- generous pinch sugar
- 1 butternut squash, peeled and cubed
- 2 garlic cloves, chopped
- 2 t sugar
- 1 c chicken or veggie broth
- 2 t peppercorns
- 1 1/2 - 2 lb halibut or other quality white fleshed fish, in filets
- 1 red chile, julienned
- cilantro

Heat some neutral oil (I like grapeseed here, but any vegetable oil or butter will do), in a large sauce pan and slowly saute the onion until softened, about 5 minutes. Add the cabbage and the halved red chile and a generous sprinkling of salt and saute, covered, until very soft, about 15 minutes. Do not brown. Check for seasoning. Salt only here, no pepper. That comes later.

In a bowl, mix the ketchup, honey, soy sauce, nam pla, chili sauce, and pinch of sugar together.

In a large skillet, melt some butter (about 2T) and add the squash and garlic. Saute until the squash just begins to brown, about 10 minutes, then add the 2 t sugar. Add the broth. Crush your peppercorns in a mortar until they are cracked, but not ground. Add them to

the squash and continue to cook until it is very soft, but still in cubes. Check for salt and add nam pla if necessary.

Season your fish with salt and pepper and sear in a very hot skillet until not quite cooked through. Brush your tamarind sauce on one side of each filet and broil for just a minute.

Don't allow the sauce to scorch or catch fire.

Serve by putting the braised cabbage on a plate, top with some squash, then a filet.

Garnish with some of the julienned chile and some cilantro leaves. Repeat with the other filets. Or serve family style on one platter. For that you can use one large fish filet instead of several. It's a nice way to present the dish.

Have a fabulous first week! -jm

Ribollita: a great Tuscan vegetable stew with kale: the portuguese kale you get this week would be perfect for this one. This is a vegetarian version from Heidi at [101 Cookbooks](#), it's worth [clicking through](#) just to see her photo. Then you'll want to make it!