

PINEAPPLE FRIED RICE

This is a recipe my family has been serving for 40 years and I've put on every menu I've ever written. I think fried rice is the perfect food. In one plate you get rice, protein, veg and aromatics. What else could you wish for? This is a perfect example of Thai fried rice versus Chinese. Fish sauce is the primary salt, no eggs are used and it's a more wet style of fried rice.

SERVES 4

1 large pineapple
3 tbsp (45 ml) vegetable oil
2 tbsp (30 g) dried shrimp (Thai)
4-6 cloves garlic, coarsely chopped
3 tbsp (45 g) diced shallots
½ tbsp (8 g) finely chopped ginger
½ cup (95 g) thinly sliced Chinese sausage
4-6 medium shrimp, peeled and cleaned
4 cups (960 g) day-old rice
2-3 tbsp (30-45 ml) fish sauce
1-2 tbsp (15-30 ml) Thai soybean sauce
1 tbsp (15 g) sugar
½ tbsp (8 g) curry powder
2 to 3 green onions, chopped
Pinch white pepper
3 tbsp (45 g) cilantro leaves

Cut the pineapple in half lengthwise and carve out the middle to create a bowl. Cut about 1 cup (165 g) of pineapple pieces into medium dice and reserve for making the fried rice.

In a large skillet or wok, heat the oil for about a minute or until wisps of white smoke appear. Add the dried shrimp, garlic, shallots, ginger and Chinese sausage and cook, stirring constantly, until the sausage starts to crisp, about 3 minutes.

Stir in the shrimp and cook until the shrimp starts to turn pink, about 1 minute. Fold in the rice, making sure not to break the rice grains. Stir pushing down with the flat side of the spatula in small circular motions. This will separate the grains without breaking them. Cook for an additional minute until the rice starts to get hot.

Stir in the fish sauce, soybean sauce, sugar and curry powder. Continue to stir it for another minute until well combined. Fold in the reserved pineapple and incorporate it well for another 1 to 2 minutes.

Fold in the green onions and white pepper. Transfer the fried rice into the halved pineapple. Garnish with some fresh cilantro.

