

GINGER'S



FIRE & THUNDER

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Sweet ginger chicken

Serves 4–6

4 chicken breasts, cut into chunks
2 tablespoons oil
1 onion, finely chopped
7 garlic cloves, sliced
8 cm (3¼ inches) ginger, peeled, sliced thickly and smashed
1 large red chilli, seeded and sliced
3 spring onions (scallions), sliced
1 large tomato, roughly chopped
2 tablespoons oyster sauce
1 tablespoon soy sauce
1 tablespoon dark palm sugar (gula jawa), shaved
1 tablespoon kecap manis

The Chinese influence on this chicken stir-fry is clear, but the sauce has an added treacly depth from Indonesian palm sugar and kecap manis. It is dark and glossy and permeated by the husky heat of fresh ginger. A perfect speedy supper, popular with children.

Season the chicken with salt and black pepper. Prepare all the other ingredients for stir-frying as you'll need to move quickly once it gets going.

Heat the oil in a large wok or frying pan over a high heat. Stir-fry the chicken until half cooked through, then remove from the pan, leaving the oil behind.

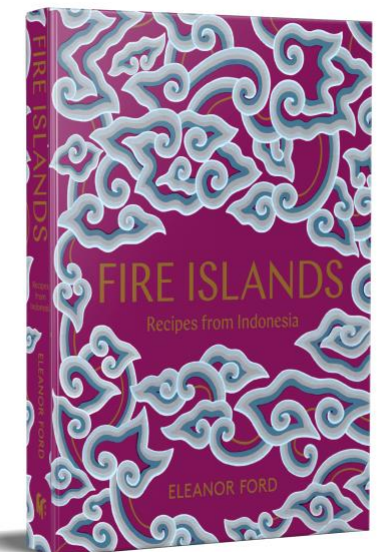
Over a medium heat, soften the onion. Add the garlic and smashed ginger slices and cook for a minute. Then add the chilli and spring onion and stir through. Finally, in goes the tomato. Stir-fry everything for a minute more.

Return the chicken to the wok and add 175 ml (¾ cup) water. Season with oyster sauce, soy sauce and palm sugar: umami, salty, sweet.

Bubble until the chicken is cooked through and succulent and the liquid has reduced to a glossy sauce. Finally, stir through the kecap manis and taste for seasoning.

Menu ideas

Serve with Mie goreng (page 169) or make a vegetable stir-fry known in Indonesia as *cap cai* – wok-fry spring onions (scallions), ribbons of chilli and lots of garlic, add a colourful variety of seasonal vegetables and perhaps some black fungus. Season with oyster sauce and soy sauce.



EGG & BACON ROUGAILLE

Rougaille dizef ~~~~~ Mauritius

Serves 2

Mauritius is a nation with the spice routes woven into its fabric. The island was uninhabited before the arrival of European settlers during the spice race, when the Dutch, French, then British each took advantage of its strategic Indian Ocean position. A turning point in history came when an eighteenth-century French spice trader, impeccably named Pierre Poivre, smuggled nutmeg plants from Indonesian Maluku and planted them in Mauritius and Réunion, so breaking the Dutch trading monopoly and making spices more accessible to the world than ever before. (Poivre is possibly also the one immortalised in the tongue twister 'Peter Piper picked a peck of pickled pepper'.)

The well-worn phrase 'melting pot' does capture Mauritian culture. A fractured past founded on trade has left a population of Indians, Africans, Chinese and Europeans, and given rise to one of the world's great Creole cuisines.

A cornerstone of the home cooking is a gingery tomato sauce called rougaille. It can enliven seafood, salted fish, sausages or, as here, be used as a base for softly poached eggs. There is an unusual clash of Western and Eastern accents – thyme meets coriander – that is typical of playful Mauritian cooking. The result is electric.

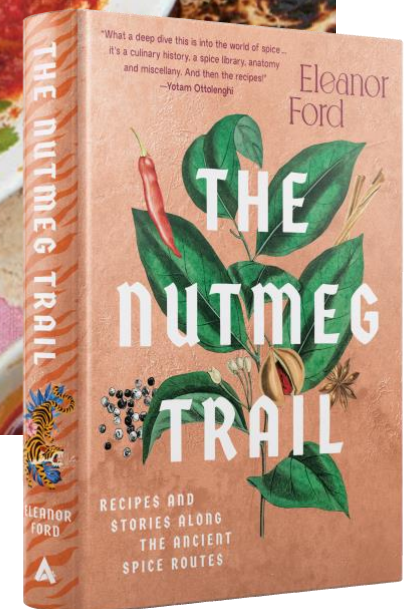
100g (¾ cup) bacon lardons
1 onion, finely chopped
3cm (1¼ inches) ginger, peeled and minced
(1 tablespoon)
4 garlic cloves, minced
1 bird's eye chilli, seeds in, finely chopped
1 teaspoon cumin seeds
Small bunch thyme, leaves stripped
400g (14oz) ripe tomatoes, chopped,
or good tinned tomatoes
2–4 eggs
Handful coriander (cilantro) leaves
Flatbreads and hot sauce, to serve (optional)

Put the lardons in a frying pan and set over a medium heat. Cook until the fat renders, then the bacon crisps. Add the onion and fry until well softened. Add the ginger, garlic, chilli, cumin and thyme leaves and cook for a few minutes longer.

Add the tomatoes and cook at a slow boil for about 20 minutes, squishing the tomatoes with the back of a spoon occasionally to break them down. The red should deepen a shade. Taste and balance the flavours with salt and a little sugar, if needed.

Make dents in the sauce with the spoon and crack an egg into each one. Sprinkle each egg with a little salt and cover the pan with a lid (or a plate). Leave the eggs to steam for 4–5 minutes, until the whites are set and the yolks are still runny.

Scatter with coriander and serve with flatbreads and hot sauce, if you like.



ANATOMY OF SPICE

ROOTS & RHIZOMES	LEAVES	FLOWERS
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Ginger	Curry leaf	Clove
Galangal	Lime leaf	Saffron
Turmeric		Rose
Liquorice		

PODS	BARKS	RESINS
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Cardamom	Cinnamon	Asafoetida
Star anise	Cassia	Mastic
Vanilla		

FRUITS	SEEDS
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Pepper	Nutmeg
Sumac	Cumin
Tamarind	Coriander
Amchoor	Fennel
Allspice	Mustard
Caraway	Nigella
Chilli	Fenugreek
Sichuan pepper	Cacao



Youtube links shown during the presentation:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aSvH-mVeyh8>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7GvZqnbQ-Ac>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=om4OqITynDY&t=82s>