



Sambal Ikan Bilis with Nasi Lemak

Ikan Bilis is the Malay name for a tiny anchovy-like fish, caught, dried and salted all over South East Asia. They are widely available in Asian supermarkets or online. This sauce, or sambal, is meant to be EXTREMELY hot, served as a relish with a plain rice dish such as Nasi Lemak (coconut rice), for breakfast or lunch. We tell you how to cook both elements here. **serves 4**

For the sambal:

- 15-20 fresh birds eye chillies, with seeds
 - 4 cloves garlic
 - 1 onion, roughly chopped
 - 1 tsp shrimp paste
 - 40g ikan bilis
 - 3 tbsp peanut oil or vegetable oil
 - 150 ml water
 - 2 tsp dark soy sauce or tamarind paste
 - 3 tsp sugar (palm or muscavado is best)
1. Place the chillies, onion, garlic, oil, shrimp paste and ikan bilis in a blender to create a smooth paste.
 2. Heat the oil in a wok and add the paste. Cook over a medium heat for about 10 minutes, stirring.
 3. Add the water, soy sauce and sugar and continue to cook until the sauce has thickened.
 4. Check the flavour, adding salt, sugar or soy to taste.
 5. Serve at room temperature with the Nasi Lemak.

For the Nasi Lemak:

- 200g short-grain rice (pudding rice or sushi rice)
 - 2 cans coconut milk (we suggest going for the half-fat ones here!) or 1 block with 600ml water.
 - 1 tsp salt
 - 2-3 drops pandan essence, or 3 pandan leaves, tied into a knot (optional)
1. Rinse the rice in several changes of water, then place in a pan and add the coconut milk, salt and pandan leaves or essence.
 2. Cover and bring gently to the boil, and simmer for about 20 minutes until the rice is tender, stirring every so often to make sure the rice has not stuck. Add a little extra hot water if the liquid has all been absorbed.
 3. Serve warm or cold with a spoonful of sambal on the side.



bit spicy

Cook's notes:

- You can add to the texture of the sambal by adding fried ikan bilis: heat some oil in a separate pan, and fry a handful of the fish until crisp. Drain, stir into the sambal and serve.
- The sambal will keep for a few days in the fridge.