

# Thai Street Food

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nmu catering & events

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Updated September 2015



printed & distributed by

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# about our instructor

Taught by Nathan Mileski, Certified Executive Chef and Director of Simply Superior Catering & Events, Northern Michigan University. Nathan will be demonstrating recipes from the book *Simple Thai Food* by Leela Punyaratabandhu

At NMU, Nathan oversees the culinary aspects of multiple campus dining operations, including Japanese, Latin, multiple coffee concepts, its commissary kitchen, bakery, and two residential student dining facilities, as well as all catering on and off campus. On an average day all of these units serve over 10,000 guests.

Nathan's career began after graduating from the Culinary Institute of America in Hyde Park, New York. His first position was under Certified Master Chef Kevin Walker at the prestigious Lafayette Country Club in Lake Minnetonka, Minnesota. The Upper Peninsula has always been Nathan's home so he returned to take the position of Executive Chef and Food and Beverage Director at Drummond Island Resort and Conference Center. Under Nathan's direction, Bayside Dining, the resort's fine dining restaurant, was featured in the December 2006 Michigan editions of *Gourmet* and *Bon Appétit* as one of twelve "Great Restaurants of America" and also in *Savor Michigan Cookbook* as one of thirty-six featured restaurants.

Nathan has received three American Culinary Federation Upper Michigan

Chef of the Year Awards (1997, 2002, and 2011) and achieved ACF Certified Executive Chef status in January 2009. In March 2009, Nathan competed in the NACUFS (National Association of College and University Food Services) Culinary Challenge regional competition and won a bid to nationals, as well as a silver medal. Nathan advanced to win the National NACUFS Culinary Challenge and another silver medal. Nathan has also led two teams to gold medals at the University of Massachusetts Chef Culinary Conference in 2009 and 2011, as well as a bronze medal in 2013. Nathan was more recently featured in the 2014 & 2013 Best Chef's America book, which identifies top chef's from across the country. Nathan has also been featured in the Great Lakes Whitefish Cookbook, New York Times article "Now Entering Upper Michigan's Smoked Fish Zone", as well in multiple editions of *On-Campus Dining*, *Food Service Director*, as well as *Food Management* magazines.

When Nathan is not in the kitchen he enjoys spending time with his wife and two sons, hunting and fishing the bountiful Upper Peninsula, as well as gardening, canning, and honing his charcuterie/meat butchery skills.

**Contact Simply Superior Catering for your next event!**

Visit [meet.nmu.edu/dining/simplysuperior](http://meet.nmu.edu/dining/simplysuperior), call (906)227-2623, or email [meet@nmu.edu](mailto:meet@nmu.edu)

# phanaeng curry

(kaeng phanaeng kai kap fak thong) Serves 4.

- ½ C coconut cream (the thick layer at the top of a can of coconut milk)
- 1 T coconut oil or vegetable oil
- ¼ C homemade red curry paste or 2 T store-bought
- ½ of a small kabocha or buttercup squash, halved, seeded, and cut into 1-inch cubes, 1 1/2 to 2 pounds total
- 1 C coconut milk
- 2 T fish sauce
- 1 pound boneless, skinless chicken breasts or thighs, cut on the diagonal (30- to 40-degree angle) into thin, bite-size pieces
- ½ C sodium-free chicken broth
- 2 T packed grated palm sugar, or 1 T light brown sugar
- 1 long red Thai chile, stemmed, seeded, and cut lengthwise into thin strips
- 3 makrut lime leaves, deveined and thinly sliced lengthwise
- ½ C Thai sweet basil (or Mediterranean basil) leaves (optional, especially if kaffir lime leaves are unused)

In a 2-quart saucepan, combine the coconut cream, coconut oil, and curry paste over medium-high heat and stir until the paste is fragrant and the coconut fat separates, about 2 minutes.

Add the squash to the saucepan along with the coconut milk and 1 tablespoon of the fish sauce; stir lightly to make sure every piece of squash is submerged. Turn the heat to high. Once the liquid comes to a boil, reduce the heat to medium, cover the saucepan, and cook the squash until tender, about 5 to 7 minutes. The squash should still hold its shape, yet is tender enough that you can pierce it easily with the tip of a paring knife.

Add the chicken to the saucepan along with the chicken broth, sugar, and the remaining 1 tablespoon fish sauce. Turn the heat up to medium-high; bring the curry back to a boil, stirring occasionally. Once the chicken firms up and turns opaque, about 2 to 3 minutes, remove the saucepan from the heat. Stir in the red chile strips as well as the kaffir lime leaves and/or basil leaves. Serve with rice.

Prepare a hot fire in a charcoal or gas grill. If using charcoal, allow the charcoal to develop a gray ash before you start grilling. Oil the grate with vegetable oil. Alternatively, heat a well-oiled stove-top grill pan over high heat until hot or leave the broiler on and oil a broiler pan. Cook the steaks, turning them once halfway through the cooking, until they are medium rare to medium. The timing will vary depending on which cooking method you are using. If possible, test if they are ready with an instant-read thermometer, which should register 140°F to 150°F, the ideal level of doneness for this dish. Transfer the steaks to a cutting board, tent with aluminum foil, and let rest for 10 to 15 minutes.

Transfer the sauce to a small serving bowl and place it on the center of a large platter. Cut the steaks against the grain into slices 1/4 to 1/2 inch thick and arrange them around the sauce bowl. Arrange the cucumber and tomatoes on the side of the platter. Sprinkle the whole cilantro leaves over the beef and serve immediately.

## red curry paste

(namphrik kaeng phet)

- 1 ½ T coriander seeds, toasted in a dry skillet over low heat until fragrant (about 1 minute)
- 2 t cumin seeds, toasted in a dry skillet over low heat until fragrant (about 1 minute)
- 1 t white peppercorns
- 7 dried Thai long chiles, seeded, soaked in hot water until soft, and drained
- 10 dried bird's eye chiles, seeded, soaked in hot water until soft, and drained
- 2 t salt
- 2 T finely chopped galangal
- 2 T thinly sliced lemongrass
- 2 t finely chopped lime rind
- 2 t shrimp paste
- 2 T finely chopped cilantro roots or stems
- 10 cloves garlic
- ½ C sliced shallots

Puree everything in a food processor until smooth.

## specialty ingredients

The following ingredients used in these recipes may be unfamiliar. Some are easy to find, and others may take a little work. Here is a little help tracking them down.

**Rice Flour**- Available at the Marquette Food Co-op in brown or white. White is recommended for the Thai-style bananas that use this ingredient.

**Fish Sauce**- Marquette Food Co-op.

**Oyster Sauce**- Available at Econo Foods.

**Thai Chillies**- Available at Econo and seasonally available at the Co-op in the summer from local vendors.

**Coconut Cream**- You can use regular coconut milk, just only use the solids. You can even put the can in the refrigerator for a while to help separate the coconut solids from the water. For pure coconut cream check online or at an Asian grocery.

**Lemongrass**- Sometimes available from a local supplier at the Co-op, often at Econo from a national company.

**Makrut Lime and Leaves**- Sometimes available from the Co-op fresh. Dried leaves are not as oily but can be used as a substitute, available online.

**Galangal**- Sometimes available from the Co-op or online.

**Thai Basil**- Sometimes available from the Co-op.

**Xanthum Gum**- Pronounced “zan-thum”. Available from Bob's Red Mill at the Co-op. Found in the baking aisle since it is often used in gluten-free baking

**Sticky Rice**- The Co-op carries a lovely heirloom variety from Equal Exchange

**Pandanus Leaves**- Available online. The sticky rice with mangoes is better with it, but will still be tasty if you need to omit this.

**Dried Shrimp and Shrimp Paste**- Available from Asian grocery stores or online.

*Our instructor highly recommends importfoods.com as a source of Thai ingredients you can't find locally.*

# leaf wrap bites (maing kham) Serves 4.

## sauce

- 1 T meaty dried shrimp
- ½ C hot water
- 1 stalk lemongrass
- ½ C plus 2 T unsweetened dried coconut flakes
- 1 shallot, about 1 ounce, peeled and sliced thinly against the grain
- 2 (¼-inch-thick) slices galangal, coarsely chopped
- 2 T coarsely chopped peeled ginger
- 1 t shrimp paste
- ½ C packed grated palm sugar plus ⅓ C packed dark brown sugar (or substitute 2/3 C packed dark brown sugar)
- 1 T fish sauce
- ¼ C water
- 2 T finely chopped roasted peanuts

## salad

- 1 lime
- 1 (3") piece fresh ginger, peeled and cut into ¼-inch dice
- 2 shallots, about 1 ounce each, peeled and cut into ¼-inch dice
- ½ C roasted peanuts
- 5 or 6 fresh bird's eye chilies, sliced crosswise 1/4 inch thick
- ⅓ C meaty dried shrimp
- 20 to 30 cha-phlu leaves or 3" squares collard green or Chinese broccoli leaves

To make the sauce, soak the dried shrimp in hot water for 15 minutes. Meanwhile, trim off and discard the leafy parts of the lemongrass stalk, remove the tough outer leaves of the bulb portion until the smooth, pale green core is exposed, and trim off the root end. Working from the root end, cut the bulb crosswise into paper-thin slices, stopping once you reach the point at which the purple rings disappear. Set the slices aside and discard the remainder.

Put the dried coconut flakes in a wok or 14-inch skillet and toast them on medium heat, stirring constantly, until medium brown, about 2 to 3 minutes. Reserve 2 tablespoons of the toasted coconut flakes for the sauce and set the remainder aside for the salad. Wipe out any toasted coconut sediment from the wok. Add the lemongrass slices, shallot, galangal, and ginger to the clean wok, then toast over medium-high heat, stirring constantly,

# grilled steaks with roasted tomato dipping sauce

(crying tiger, suea rong hai kap jaeo ma-khuea thet) Serves 4

- 3 (8 oz) rib-eye steaks
- 1 T thin soy sauce
- 1 T oyster sauce
- 1 T vegetable oil
- ½ t ground white pepper
- 4 oz cherry tomatoes
- 3 large cloves garlic, unpeeled
- 1 large shallot, about 1 ounce, unpeeled
- 1 T fish sauce
- 1 T freshly squeezed lime juice
- 2 T red pepper flakes
- ½ t packed light or dark brown sugar
- 2 T coarsely chopped fresh cilantro leaves, plus ½ C loosely packed whole leaves
- 2 T coarsely chopped fresh saw tooth coriander (optional)
- ½ English cucumber, or 2 pickling cucumbers, sliced crosswise ¼" thick
- 2 large Roma tomatoes, sliced crosswise ¼" thick

Position an oven rack in the middle of the oven and preheat the broiler.

Put the steaks in a wide, shallow bowl. Add the soy sauce, oyster sauce, oil, and white pepper and turn the steaks to coat them evenly with the ingredients. Cover and refrigerate for 1 hour.

Put the cherry tomatoes, garlic, and shallot on a baking sheet and broil, turning often, until charred in spots and softened, about 5 to 7 minutes. Remove from the broiler and let cool until they can be handled. Peel the garlic and shallot but leave the tomatoes unpeeled. Put the garlic in a bowl and press with the back of a spoon until reduced to a paste. Add the shallot and mash with the spoon until it breaks down into small pieces.

Add the tomatoes and cut into chunks with edge of the same spoon. Stir in the fish sauce, lime juice, pepper flakes, sugar, chopped cilantro, and saw tooth coriander; set aside.

# pork in spicy dressing with broccoli stems

(mu manao) Serves 4

- 1 lb lean pork loin or tenderloin or boneless, skinless chicken breasts
- 2 t baking soda
- 12 oz Chinese broccoli or regular broccoli stems
- 3 T freshly squeezed lime juice
- 2 T fish sauce
- 1 t packed grated palm sugar, or ½ t granulated sugar
- 4 large cloves garlic, minced
- 3 fresh bird's eye chiles, minced
- 8 C water
- 2 t salt
- 1 C crushed ice
- ¼ C packed fresh mint leaves (optional)

Cut the pork against the grain and on the diagonal (30- to 40-degree angle) into thin, bite size pieces. Put the pork in a bowl, sprinkle the baking soda over the top, and mix well (this is best done with your hands). Cover and chill while you ready the other ingredients.

If using Chinese broccoli, test to see if the stems are tender enough to eat without peeling them. If they are, trim about 1 inch off the bottom of each stalk end and any leaf stems, leaving just the main stem, which will look like an asparagus spear but thicker. If they are not, trim them as directed and then lightly peel them with a vegetable peeler. If using stems of regular broccoli, peel off the fibrous skin with a vegetable peeler until the inner core is exposed. Cut the Chinese or regular broccoli stems into sticks 5 inches long and ¾ inch thick. Arrange the stems on a plate, cover, and refrigerate.

In a bowl, stir together the lime juice, fish sauce, sugar, garlic, and chiles until the sugar dissolves. Place the bowl next to the stove.

Pour the water into a 4-quart saucepan and bring to a boil over high heat. Stir in the salt. Lower the heat until the water is barely bubbling. Immediately add the pork to the water and stir. The temperature of the water will drop to the point that it is no longer bubbling; increase the heat just a little so the water is barely bubbling again. Stir the pork gently until it is no longer pink, about 1 to 2 minutes. Using a wire-mesh skimmer or a slotted spoon, lift out the pork, shaking off the excess water, and add it to the dressing in the bowl. Toss the pork with the dressing and transfer the mixture to a serving platter.

While the pork is still warm, remove the plate of broccoli stems from the refrigerator and scatter the crushed ice over the stems. Serve the pork salad and the iced broccoli stems together, instructing diners to enjoy a bite of the pork alternately with a bite of ice-cold broccoli stem. Garnish with mint leaves.

until fragrant and the shallot slices are dry to the touch, about 5 minutes. Place the toasted mixture, drained dried shrimp, and shrimp paste in a mortar or a mini chopper and grind to a smooth paste.

Put the prepared paste, sugars, fish sauce, and water in a 1-quart saucepan and bring to a boil over medium-high heat, stirring constantly. When the sauce has thickened and reduced to about 1 cup, after 2 to 3 minutes, take the saucepan off the heat. Let the sauce cool completely.

Once the dressing is cooled, stir in the chopped peanuts and the reserved 2 tablespoons toasted coconut flakes and transfer to a small serving bowl.

To prepare the salad, quarter the lime lengthwise and trim away the core. Cut the quarters into ¼-inch dice, leaving the rind intact. Alternatively, for those who are sensitive to the bitterness of the lime rind, cut the lime into wedges (as shown in the photograph) and invite diners to squeeze about 1/2 teaspoon lime juice onto each composed salad bite.

Arrange the lime, ginger, shallots, peanuts, chilies, dried shrimp, cha-phlu leaves, and the dressing on a large serving platter.

To eat, put a leaf on your palm, add a bit of each component to the center of the leaf, top with a small spoonful of dressing, gather up the corners of the leaf to form a bag, and eat the whole thing in one bite.

## note

If the diced ginger tastes too spicy hot, rinse it in cold water three or four times until the water runs clear and blot it dry.

# fried fish and green mango salad

(pla thot yam mamuang) Serves 4.

- 1 green mango (or 3 to 4 oz. green apple)
- 2 to 3 T freshly squeezed lime juice (or distilled white vinegar if using apple)
- 12 oz skinless halibut (trout or salmon work well) – cut 1” cube
- ½ t salt
- ½ C rice flour (or all purpose)
- vegetable oil, for frying
- 1 T freshly squeezed lime juice
- 1 T fish sauce
- 2 t packed grated palm sugar (or light brown sugar)
- 2 fresh birds eye chiles, minced
- 1 large shallot, about 1 ounce, thinly sliced lengthwise
- ¼ C packed fresh cilantro leaves
- ¼ C packed fresh mint leaves
- ½ C roasted whole or halved cashews

If using mango, peel it and grate it into thin strips about 3 inches long. If using apple, there is no need to peel it. Halve and core it, then place each half cut side down and cut into slices ¼ inch thick. Stack 3 or 4 slices and cut lengthwise into 1/34 inch-wide matchsticks. Repeat until all of the apple slices are matchsticks. Immerse the apple matchsticks in the water with lime juice until needed.

In bowl combine the fish and salt and mix well. Spread the flour on and plate and coat the fish cubes with the flour, shaking off the excess. Arrange the fish cubes, not touching, on a large plate. Let the fish stand for 10 minutes to allow the flour coating to absorb the moisture on the surface of the fish and form a crunchy crust when fried.

To fry fish, pour the oil to a depth of 2” in a wok or a small, deep skillet and heat to 325F to 350F. Line plate with paper towels.

Add about one-third of the fish cubes to the hot oil and fry until light golden brown and crispy about 8 to 10 minutes. Using a slotted spoon or a wire mesh skimmer transfer to towel lined plate. Repeat with the remaining two

To assemble the dumplings, lay a spring roll skin flat on a work surface and put 1½ tablespoons of the cooled filling in the center. Gather together the corners of the skin and adjust the dumpling so it takes on a round, rather than flat, profile. Using 1 piece of onion blade, tie it around the gathered corners twice to secure them. With a pair of kitchen shears, trim off the dangling blade ends. Repeat with the remaining spring roll skins and filling.

To fry the dumplings, pour the oil to a depth of 3 inches into a wok, Dutch oven or deep fryer and heat to 325°F. To test if the oil is ready without a thermometer, stick an unvarnished wooden chopstick into the oil; when the oil is hot enough, a steady stream of tiny bubbles will rise from the tip of the chopstick. Line a baking sheet with paper towels and place it next to the stove.

Using a slotted spoon, carefully lower 3 or 4 filled pouches into the hot oil and deep fry for 2 to 3 minutes, until golden brown all over. Using the slotted spoon, transfer the dumplings to the towel-lined baking sheet. Repeat until all of the dumplings are cooked.

Do not serve the dumplings right out of the oil, as the filling will be much too hot to eat. Let them cool down to slightly warmer than room temperature, then arrange them on a platter and serve with the sweet chile sauce.

## basic aromatic paste

(three buddies, sam kloe) Makes 1 ½ cups

- 4 heads of garlic, separated into cloves and peeled
- 2 T of whole white peppercorns or ground white pepper
- 10 cilantro roots, or 1 C loosely packed chopped cilantro stems

Grind all ingredients in a mortar or food processor into a month paste. Store loosely in a resalable plastic bag and freeze up to 1 month. Thaw 5 to 10 minutes at room temp prior to using.

# crispy dumplings

(gold purses, thung thong) Makes 18 dumplings

- 7 green onions
- 1 T vegetable oil, plus more for deep-frying
- 1 T basic aromatic paste (see recipe)
- 4 oz white mushrooms, cut into ½-inch dice
- 8 oz ground chicken or pork
- 1 T thin soy sauce
- 1 T oyster sauce
- 1 t fish sauce
- ½ t granulated sugar
- 1 (8oz) can whole water chestnuts, drained, rinsed, patted dry and cut into ¼-inch dice
- 18 (4") square or round frozen spring roll skins or fresh or frozen wonton skins, thawed if frozen and kept covered with a kitchen towel
- ¾ C sweet chile sauce, homemade (recipe page 7) or store-bought, for serving

Trim off and discard the roots of the green onions. Cut each onion into 2 pieces, separating the white bulb end from the green blades. Slice the white parts crosswise ¼-inch thick and reserve for the filling. Set the green blades aside.

Heat 1 tablespoon of the oil in a wok or a 14-inch skillet over high heat. When the oil is hot, add the sliced onions, aromatic paste and mushrooms and stir-fry for about 2 minutes, until the onions and mushrooms have softened. Add the chicken, soy sauce, oyster sauce, fish sauce, sugar and water chestnuts and stir with a spatula, breaking up the chicken as finely as you can with the blunt end of the spatula. Continue to stir-fry for 5 to 8 minutes, until all of the chicken is cooked through and all of the liquid has evaporated. Remove the pan from the heat and let the filling cool to room temperature.

To blanch the “strings” for tying the bags, fill a 1-quart saucepan half full with water and bring the water to a boil. Place a bowl of iced water next to the stove. When the water is boiling, add the green onion blades, pushing them down gently with a spoon to submerge them in the water. After 30 seconds, transfer the onion blades to the iced water. Within 1 minute, the onions should be cool enough to handle. Remove them from the water and, with your fingers or the tip of a paring knife, split each blade in half lengthwise; set aside.

batches.

If using apple, drain and pat dry. In a bowl, stir together the lime juice, fish sauce, and sugar until the sugar dissolves. Add the chiles, shallot, and mango or apple and toss well. Taste and correct for seasoning as needed. It should be predominately sour, then salty, with some sweet in the back ground. Once the salad tastes right to you, add the cilantro and mint and toss well.

Keep the fried fish, the mango salad, and the cashews separate until the moment you are ready to eat, then add the fish and cashews to the salad, toss everything together, and enjoy before the fish gets soggy and the cashews lose their crunch.

## sweet chile sauce

(nam jim kai) Makes 1 cup

- 3 large garlic cloves
- 2 fresh Thai chiles, stemmed
- ¼ C distilled white vinegar
- ½ C granulated sugar
- 1 ½ t salt
- ¾ C plus 2 T water
- 1 T tapioca flour, potato starch, or corn starch

In a blender, combine the garlic, chiles, vinegar, sugar, salt, and ¾ C water and blend until the mixture resembles a smooth salsa. Transfer the mixture to a small saucepan, and place over medium high heat, and bring to a boil, stirring occasionally. Lower the heat to medium and simmer uncovered, stirring occasionally, until the garlic and chile bits have softened, about 3 minutes.

Meanwhile, in a small bowl, whisk together the tapioca flour and the remaining 2 tablespoons of water until the flour dissolves. Whisk the flour mixture into the sauce and continue to simmer until the sauce thickens slightly, about 1 minute longer. Remove the pan from the heat and cool completely.

Transfer the cooled sauce to a glass jar and cap tightly. Store in refrigerator for up to 1 month.

# sweet potato fritters with peanut-sweet chile sauce

(man thot) Serves 4.

## fritters

- 1½ pounds sweet potatoes or yams
- ¾ C rice flour (preferred) or all-purpose flour
- ¼ C cornstarch
- 1 t baking soda
- ½ t salt
- ¼ C unsweetened dried coconut flakes
- 1 T white sesame seeds
- ½ C plus 1 T water (¾ C if using all-purpose flour)
- 1 T basic aromatic paste (page 11)
- vegetable oil, for deep-frying

## dipping sauce

- 1 C sweet chile sauce, homemade (page 7) or store-bought
- ½ C roasted peanuts, finely chopped
- ¼ C loosely packed fresh cilantro leaves, coarsely chopped
- 1 fresh bird's chile, chopped (optional)

To make the fritters, peel the sweet potatoes, then cut them lengthwise into French fry-like sticks about 1/2 inch thick and of any length. In a large bowl, stir together the flour, cornstarch, baking soda, salt, coconut, and sesame seeds. Whisk in the water and aromatic paste until thoroughly combined.

The batter will be thick and pasty, which may send your Spidey sense tingling. But do not worry, as that is the way the batter is supposed to be. Add the sweet potato sticks and use your hands to turn them in the batter, coating them as evenly as possible. Your hands will work better than a spoon or spatula here because the batter is thick. You will see coconut and sesame seeds adhering to the sticks in random spots, much like coarse salt on hard pretzels. That is great—that is what you want. Leave the sweet potatoes in the bowl and set the bowl aside.

To make the dipping sauce, put the sweet chile sauce in a small serving bowl. Sprinkle the peanuts, cilantro, and chile on top. Do not mix them together until serving time.

To fry the fritters, pour the oil to a depth of 3 inches into a wok, Dutch oven, or other suitable vessel and heat to 325°F to 350°F. To test if the oil is ready without a thermometer, stick an unvarnished wooden chopstick into the oil; when the oil is hot enough, a steady stream of tiny bubbles will rise from the tip of the chopstick. Line a baking sheet with paper towels and place it next to the stove.

One at a time, drop the sweet potato sticks into the hot oil. Fry them in batches, being careful not to crowd the pan. Because sweet potatoes have orange flesh, it is difficult to know when the sticks are golden brown. But after about 2 minutes, the crust should start to darken and form a solid shell, and that is when the fritters are ready. Using a wire-mesh skimmer or slotted spoon, transfer the fritters to the towel-lined baking sheet. Repeat until all of the sweet potato sticks are cooked.

To finish the dipping sauce, stir the peanuts, cilantro, and chile into the chile sauce. Arrange the fritters on a platter and serve with the dipping sauce alongside. Any leftover fritters can be reheated in a 375°F oven until they are crispy again.