Grilled Fish with Coriander

INGREDIENTS:

1 Small or Medium-Sized Whole Fish, Gutted (E.G. Trout, Snapper, Sea Bass, Sea Perch, Sea Bream, or Other White Fish
2 Limes (Or 3-4 Key Limes)

Sauce:
1/3 Cup Water
1/2 Tbsp. Tamarind Paste (Available At Indian/Asian Stores) or Substitute 1 Tbsp. Lime Juice +1/2 Tsp. Dark Soy Sauce
3 Cloves Garlic
1 Heaping Tsp. Brown Sugar
1 Thumb-Size Piece Galangal or Ginger, Peeled and Sliced
1 Cup Fresh Coriander Leaves and Stems
2 Tbsp. Fish Sauce
1/2 Red Bell Pepper, De-Seeded and Diced
1-2 Fresh Red Chilies, Minced (De-Seeded If You Prefer Less Heat)

GARNISH:
Fresh Coriander, Sliced Limes

DIRECTIONS:

1. Squeeze the juice of 1-2 limes over and inside fish. Sprinkle surface with salt and set aside while you prepare the sauce.

2. Place water, tamarind (or lime juice + soy sauce), garlic, sugar, galangal (or ginger), coriander, chili, and fish sauce in a food processor. Process well (or chop and mix by hand).

3. Pour the sauce into a sauce pan. Add the diced pepper and simmer over medium-low heat for 5-8 minutes. Taste test the sauce for salt and sour-sweetness (note that it should taste tangy), adding more fish sauce if not salty enough, and more sugar if you find it too sour. Cover and keep warm while you cook the fish.
   Tip: the bell pepper should retain some of its crunchiness.

4. Grill the fish on the barbecue or on a stove-top grill, or deep-fry it in a wok or large frying pan with 1 cup canola or other vegetable oil (oil should be at least 1 inch deep). Allow to fry about 5 minutes on each side, or until the flesh has browned and flakes easily.

Fish Cooking Tip: Don't flip the fish too early, or the skin will stick to the pan/barbecue. Allow it to cook at least 2 minutes before turning (the natural oils of the fish will then come through and "unstick" it).

5. To serve, plate the fish and pour the sauce over. Garnish with sprigs of fresh coriander and wedges of lime. Serve with plenty of Thai jasmine rice and enjoy with a cold lager or glass of white wine.

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