

Ingredients:

- 1 whole medium CAT FISH. Ask the people at the market to CLEAN it well and cut it into 1 inch slices, cut the head into small pieces. (Mom suggests to keep the fish head, it makes the broth tastes better.)
- TAMARIND Seedless 1 pack. (Divide the pack into 8 parts, cut 1/8 piece out from the pack, soak it in hot water for few minutes then use the spoon to mash it into sauce.
- 2 stalks of CELERY, thin-cut.
- PINEAPPLE (few slices, it depends on how much you like.)
- 1big fresh TOMATOES (take out all the seeds and cut into small pieces.)
- 4 or 5 OKRA (optional,) if use, clean and leave them whole, only cut a little bit at the top end (if cut too far deep, okra will releases the slimy juice into the broth and you will not like it.)
- BEAN SPROUTS 1 handful. (the left over bean sprouts can be stir-fry real quick with olive oil , seasoning with mushroom powder, sprinkles with black pepper and garnish with green onion.) Voila! You'll have one vegetable dish.
- 1 or 2 THAI CHILI (use the scissors to cut thin and get rid all of the seeds, if you want a little spicy.)
- 4 cloves of GARLIC (slice thin.)
- 2 whole medium SHALLOTS (slice thin.)
- Small bun of RICE PADDY HERB, clean the whole bun , use half bun and cut into 1/2 inch long. Wrap other half in the wrapper and keep it in the freezer for the future use. (Mom will send the picture. If you can not find it or do not like the smell then you don't have to get it. But that herb gives Canh Chua a very unique smell and taste.

Step one:

Clean the fish, place it in the bowl, drain all the water out, pour in 2 TBSP fish sauce, some black pepper and set it aside.

Clean and cut all the vegetables, place them separately and put aside.

Step two:

Use a big enough pot, turn the stove to medium heat then pour in 3 TBSP of olive oil, put the already chopped shallots in and stir for few minutes, add in chopped garlic and keep stirring until lightly brown, (watch out, garlic always burns faster than onion,) lastly, add 1/4 of chili powder (the one that mom gave you,) and pour in 5-6 cups of water right away (don't want the chili powder to burn.) Add the tamarind sauce, 1 TSP of salt, 2 TBSP of sugar, 2 TSP of fish sauce into the broth then turn the heat up to boil. (Give more salt, sugar and tamarind to the broth to your liking, you can substitute vinegar for tamarind if you want more sour taste, prepare more tamarind sauce can be time consuming.)

Step three:

After the pot of water is boiled,(keep the stove on high heat,) carefully place all the fish into the boiling broth. Wait for the broth to boil again for 30 seconds, then add pineapple, tomatoes, celery, bean sprouts, fresh red chili to the broth, let it boil for another 30 seconds and turn off the stove.

Garnish with Rice paddy herb and black pepper. Serve HOT.

Happy cooking, con! Love you!