

The Nutrition Reporter™

EXTRA

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The independent newsletter that reports vitamin, mineral, and food therapies

Foods, Recipes, Unique Food Products, and Several Cookbook Reviews

Over the years, I've noticed that some of the best nutritionally oriented physicians often think more in terms of the health benefits of supplements than of food per se. Good food is essential for good health, and at this time of year, nearly everyone is thinking about food and mouth-watering meals. So in this "extra" issue, I would like to share a couple of my favorite recipes. Depending on the amount of spices you use, you can make these dishes hot or mild. So start with just a little of the curry spices, then add more to suit your personal tastes and level of hotness. You can always add more spices, but you can't temper a dish once it's hot.

Chicken in Thai Red Curry *Serves 4+*

1 tablespoon macadamia nut oil or coconut oil
2-3 cloves garlic, sliced thinly
½ cup asparagus, cut in about ½ inch pieces
1 12-ounce can coconut milk (not lite)
1 tablespoon Thai Kitchen Red Curry Paste
½ teaspoon turmeric
¼ teaspoon red pepper flakes
1 to 1 ½ pounds boneless, skinless chicken breast, cut into cubes or slices
Optional: ½ teaspoon Thai Kitchen fish sauce (optional because it contains some sugar)
20 small fresh basil leaves

Heat the oil in a deep skillet at high-heat and, when hot, sauté the garlic and asparagus until soft. Slowly pour the coconut milk into the skillet, and then add 1 tablespoon of Thai Kitchen Red Curry Paste. Also add the turmeric and red pepper flakes. Using a spatula, thoroughly mix the paste in the coconut milk, while bringing it to a light boil. Add the chicken, stir just a little so all of it is covered by the coconut milk. Cover the skillet (use aluminum foil if you don't have a cover), turn the heat down to medium, and cook for 15 minutes, stirring

occasionally. Add basil leaves for about 1 minute, then serve with steamed cauliflower and rice. You can substitute shrimp for the chicken and Thai Kitchen Green Curry Paste instead of Red Curry.

Curried Chicken Salad *Serves 4+*

2½ to 3 cups (1 to 1.5 pounds) chicken breast, boneless and skinless, cooked, cooled, and diced
1 cup celery, diced
½ cup organic raisins
½ cup raw almond slices
1-2 teaspoons curry powder blend
¼ teaspoon ground cayenne pepper
2 teaspoons apple cider vinegar
1 cup high-quality olive-oil or canola mayonnaise

Combine the chicken, celery, raisins, and almond slices in a large bowl, and mix together with a large spoon. Add the curry powder and cayenne pepper, and mix the ingredients together again. Now drizzle on the vinegar, and add the mayonnaise, starting with about ½ cup and adding more mayonnaise to suit your personal preference for creaminess. Allow the ingredients to integrate in the refrigerator for 1 to 2 hours before serving to enable flavors. You can substitute diced turkey for the chicken. Serve with a tossed green salad or sliced apple.

Jack's Restorative Cold-and-Flu Tea

This homemade brew soothes the throat and nasal passages when you've got a cold, flu, or sore throat.

1 teabag of chamomile tea
1 teabag of mint tea
1 teaspoon or so of dried rosehips
½ teaspoon or so of honey
1-2 cups of hot water

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Steep the tea in the hot water for 5 to 10 minutes. Meanwhile, place the rose hips in a metal tea infuser and steep them in the hot water as well. Add the honey, stir, and serve.

Unique Product Recommendations

I would like to recommend the products of several food companies that I have been very pleased with in recent years. I have *no* financial interest in any of these companies.

Lotus Foods. This small company markets a growing number of exotic rices and rice flours. My favorite is the black “Forbidden Rice.” Also good are the Bhutanese Red Rice and the Indonesian Volcano Rice. Do note that cooking times are different between these and brown and white rice varieties. I also like using the Bhutanese Red Rice flour instead of regular flour when “breading” chicken and some types of seafood. www.lotusfoods.com

Miroku. When it comes to green tea, you get what you pay for. The taste of green tea comes from its content of L-theanine, an amino acid that has been shown to improve mental focus and induce feelings of relaxation. Miroku distributes a high-quality organic green tea – each tea bag makes a pitcher of green tea, which I typically brew on my kitchen counter. In high-quality green tea, the L-theanine counteracts the undesirable effects of caffeine. www.miroku-usa.com

Olivado. This year I discovered avocado oil, a cooking and salad-dressing oil with the same healthy fat profile of olive oil. Avocado oil is not quite as overpowering as olive oil can sometimes be. Of Olivado’s several varieties, my favorite is the company’s rosemary-infused avocado oil. I use it as an oil-and-vinegar salad dressing, and I’ll cook eggs (scrambled or an omelet) in a little of the oil for a subtle but rich flavor. www.olivado.com

Australian Mac Nut Oil. This brand of macadamia oil also has a fat profile virtually identical to olive and avocado oils, but it’s a little more pricey. It has a subtle nutty flavor, which is just right for many dishes. I reserve it for when I don’t want the flavor of olive oil, such as in Indian or Thai curry dishes. www.mac-nut-oil.com

Cookbook Reviews

I often review nutrition and health books in the “extra” issues of *The Nutrition Reporter*™. Many the nutrition books actually focus on the therapeutic and self-care use of dietary supplements. This time I’m going to review several actual cookbooks.

Over the past couple of years, I’ve found myself cooking more Indian and Thai foods. The spices for these cuisines are rich in health-promoting antioxidants and other nutrients. However, you may have to modify (or ignore) some of the recipes because they contain sugar or wheat flour.

Everyday Indian, by Bal Arneson. (Whitecap Books, 2009, \$29.95) Most of this book’s 100 recipes are designed around fish, chicken, lamb, and vegetables. You may have to buy some of the food ingredients at an Indian or ethnic grocery store – bring the book with to get the right ingredients. Try the salmon cooked with traditional curry, broccoli masala, and cauliflower with yams.

Classic Lebanese Cuisine, by Chef Kamal Al-Faqih (Three Forks Books, 2009, \$24.95) Many of the recipes in this book are sublime. I’ve had some in restaurants, but it’s also nice to prepare them at home, where I can substitute or eliminate some of the ingredients or adjust the spiciness. The smoked eggplant dip (also known as baba ghannoush) is essentially an eggplant hummus. Take your time one weekend and make the chicken and spiced rice.

500 Best Sauces, Salad Dressings, Marinades & More, by George Geary (Robert Rose Books, 2009, \$24.95) Marinating chicken or beef or making a sauce can transform a ho-hum dish into something exciting. With 500 recipes, it’s easy to sidestep those that call for such unhealthy ingredients as sugar, flour, or cornstarch. You can use arrowroot as a thickener, or you can just cook and “reduce” a sauce to thicken it.

Food Matters: A Guide to Conscious Eating, by Mark Bittman (Simon & Schuster, 2009, \$25.00) Mark is a food writer for the *New York Times* and a former editor of mine at *Natural Health* magazine. In this book Mark questions many so-called healthy food ingredients and proposes a saner approach to eating. Many of his 75 recipes are quite good.

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