

Yalan's Coconut Sambal (Sri Lanka)



This tasty coconutty condiment comes all the way from Sri Lanka. Sambal is a traditional dish in Sri Lanka with many variations. It can be made using raw or cooked vegetables and spices, and sometimes Maldivian fish flakes for extra flavour, which is the preferred version that Yalan, a Tamil refugee from Sri Lanka is sharing with us here.

Cooking is so important within the Tamil community. Making sambal connects Yalan back to his homeland and the loved ones he had to leave behind: *'My Mum used to love making this dish. I used to prepare it with her in Sri Lanka. Now I make this dish myself in the UK.'*

Yalan has worked extensively with Freedom from Torture after suffering horrendous mistreatment in his own country, but has courageously rebuilt a new life for himself in the UK where he loves to cook and share food with his new friends and family.

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This recipe is taken from Sri Lanka: Recipes from Home cookbook @freedomfromtorture - A special collection of tastes and memories from Sri Lankan survivors of torture.

FULL RECIPE

Ingredients:



1 whole grated coconut
10 whole dry red chillies
1 onion
5 curry leaves
½ lemon or ½ teaspoon of tamarind paste
1 tablespoon of vegetable oil
Variation: Maldive fish flakes can be used for added taste

Method:

Scrape the coconut and set this aside.

Finely chop the onions

Heat the oil in the pan and fry the red chillies, half the onions and the curry leaves.

Pound the red chillies and the other half of the onions in a pestle and mortar until it becomes a paste. Then add the grated coconut and pound this all together for another minute.

Into this mixture add the fried onions and the curry leaves and pound again for a further minute.

Squeeze half the lemon or add half a teaspoon of tamarind paste and add salt to taste – mix well.

Note: A food processor can be used instead of a pestle and mortar