

Vanuatu is an island nation located in the South Pacific Ocean. There are 83 islands in total, with 65 of them inhabited. These volcanic islands with their rocky shorelines and in some cases little fresh water, holds a rich history and diverse culture. Root vegetables such as taro and yams are a staple, with other vegetables and fruits grown locally. Not surprisingly, fish is a prominent feature in its traditional cuisine. The national dish is called Laplap. Traditionally, a paste prepared from grated bananas, breadfruit and root vegetables wrapped in banana leaves, cooked in an underground stone oven, and served with meat for fish.

Ingredients

- 4 chicken breasts about 2 pounds total
- Salt and pepper to taste
- Juice of 1 lime
- 3 tablespoons oil divided
- 1 teaspoon turmeric
- 2 teaspoons curry powder
- Crushed red pepper flakes pinch

Rice

- 1 teaspoon oil
- 1/2 yellow onion chopped
- 1 1/2 cups rice
- 2 cups spinach roughly chopped
- 1 cup chicken broth
- 14- oz can coconut milk
- 14- oz can petite diced tomatoes drained
- 1 cup taro root grated, sub sweet potato
- Salt to taste

Sauce

- 1 teaspoon coconut oil
- 1 Thai bird chili
- 1 kaffir lime leaf
- 5 garlic cloves finely chopped
- 2 tablespoons ginger diced or grated
- 2 tablespoons flour
- 14- oz can coconut milk
- 3 scallions thinly sliced

Instructions

1. Rinse and dry the chicken. Season with the salt and pepper. Place the chicken in a large mixing bowl or gallon Ziplock bag along with the rest of the marinade ingredients. Only use one tablespoon of oil in the marinade. Let it sit for about 30 minutes.
2. In a large skillet or pot, heat the remaining two tablespoons of oil over medium-high heat. When the oil is shimmering, remove the chicken from the marinade and place it in the oil. Cook for 4 minutes per side. Place the chicken on a plate or cutting board, and cover with aluminum foil.

Rice

1. Add the one teaspoon of oil to the skillet you just used and sauté the onion for about 3-5 minutes, until translucent and soft. Add the rice and give it a good stir to combine with the onion.
2. Next, add the spinach and give it an additional stir for about one minute, until it starts to wilt.
3. Pour in the chicken broth. With a wooden spoon, deglaze the bottom of the skillet to get all the tasty bits that are stuck to the bottom.
4. Add the coconut milk, diced tomatoes, and grated sweet potato. Season with salt. Let it come to a boil, reduce to a nice medium heat, and cover. Cook for about 15 minutes.
5. Add the chicken to the skillet, cover again, and cook for 10 more minutes.

Sauce

1. During the last 10 minutes, grab a sauce pan and heat it up to a medium. Add the coconut oil.
2. In a small bowl, mix two tablespoons of coconut milk with the two tablespoons of flour.
3. When the coconut oil starts to shimmer, add the Thai chili, lime leaf, garlic and ginger and give it a good stir. Pour the coconut milk into the saucepan and whisk in the flour milk mixture. This is to prevent any clumps. Finally, add in the scallions.
4. Stir often and cook until the sauce starts to thicken. It shouldn't take more than 2 or 3 minutes. Turn the heat to low and let it stay warm until your main meal is done cooking! Remove the Thai chili and kaffir leaf from the sauce pan.
5. Time to plate up! Plate a layer of rice on a plate and serve the chicken on top. Drizzle a generous helping of sauce on top of the chicken and serve with tomato or lime wedges, and some chopped basil on top. You can also garnish with thinly sliced scallions.

Recipe from whonomstheworld.com