

Mango Sticky Rice Dessert (Serves 2 - 4)

- 1 cup Thai Sweet Rice (also called "sticky rice", available at Asian markets and grocery stores)
- 1 + 3/4 cups water
- 1 ripe mango, cut into bite-size pieces (look for mangos that are fragrant and easily bruised), or 1 pkg. frozen mango
- 1/4 cup + 1 Tbsp. brown sugar (for a natural sweetener substitute maple syrup)
- 1 can good-quality coconut milk
- 1/4 tsp. + pinch of salt
- 1 Cardamom Pod
- 2 tsp. coconut flavoring
- 1 tsp. vanilla
- 2 tsp. cornstarch or arrowroot powder dissolved in 2 Tbsp. water

Preparation:

1. Soak the sweet rice in 1 cup water for 20 minutes, or up to 1 hour.
2. When done soaking, add 3/4 cup (more) water plus 1/4 can coconut milk, 1/4 tsp. salt, 1 tsp. coconut flavoring, cardamom, and 1 Tbsp. brown sugar. Stir this into the rice, lifting any rice grains that have stuck to the bottom of the pot.
3. Gradually bring to a gentle boil, then partially cover with a lid (leaving some room for steam to escape). Turn the heat down to medium-low (#2.5 to 3 on the dial).
4. Allow to cook for 10-20 minutes, or until the water has been absorbed by the rice. Remove the pot from the heat, place the lid on tight, and leave to "steam" cook for 5-10 minutes. The heat within the rice pot will finish cooking the rice.
5. Make sauce and serve the dessert right away, or store the rice (covered) in the refrigerator until you're ready to use it. Remove Cardamom Pod.
6. To make the sauce, warm the rest of the can of coconut milk together with 1/4 cup sugar, a pinch of salt, 1 tsp. coconut flavoring and 1 tsp. vanilla flavoring over medium heat (5 minutes).
7. Add cornstarch or arrowroot powder (dissolved in the water) to the sauce and stir to thicken it slightly. As it thickens, turn down heat to low. When thickened, remove from heat (this should only take a couple of minutes). Tip: Try not to over-cook the sauce, or you will lose that wonderful coconut flavor.
8. Before serving, taste-test the sauce for sweetness, adding more sugar if desired. If too sweet for your taste, add a little more coconut milk.
9. There are 2 ways to serve this dessert:
10. Place scoops of the sticky rice in bowls (Note that sticky rice can be served cold, warm, or at room temperature, as desired). Ladle a generous amount of warm coconut sauce over the rice (creating an "island" of sticky rice). Add slices/pieces of ripe fresh mango. (If using frozen mango, be sure to give it enough time to thaw before serving.)
11. For "saucier" rice: Add rice (portion out 1 scoop per person) directly to the sauce pot and stir over low heat, gently breaking apart the larger lumps, but leaving smaller lumps/chunks). Now add the mango pieces and gently stir until everything is warmed through. Portion out into serving bowls, making sure everyone has equal amounts of rice, mango, and sauce. Enjoy!