

Chicken rice soup with lemon grass

Shnar chrook is Cambodia's answer to the classic chicken noodle soup that is popular in the West. Light and refreshing, it is the perfect choice for a hot day, as well as a great pick-me-up when you are feeling low or tired.



1 Put the chicken into a deep pan. Add all the other stock ingredients and pour in 2 litres/3½ pints/7¼ cups water. Bring to the boil for a few minutes, then reduce the heat and simmer gently with the lid on for 2 hours.

2 Skim off any fat from the stock, strain and reserve. Remove the skin from the chicken and shred the meat. Set aside.

3 Pour the stock back into the deep pan and bring to the boil. Reduce the heat and stir in the lemon grass stalks and fish sauce. Stir in the rice and simmer, uncovered, for about 40 minutes. Add the shredded chicken and season to taste.

4 Ladle the piping hot soup into warmed individual bowls, garnish with chopped coriander and the thin strips of chilli, and serve with lime wedges to squeeze over.

Cook's tip The fresh, citrus aroma of lemon grass and lime, combined with the warmth of the chillies, is invigorating and awakens the senses. However, many Cambodians and Vietnamese often spike the soup with additional chillies as a garnish, or served on the side. Variations of this soup crop up all over Cambodia and Vietnam, where it is often served as a meal in itself.



Serves four

2 lemon grass stalks, trimmed, cut into 3 pieces, and lightly bruised

15ml/1 tbsp fish sauce, such as *nam pla*

90g/3¼oz/⅓ cup short grain rice, rinsed

1 small bunch coriander (cilantro) leaves, finely chopped, and 1 green or red chilli, seeded and cut into thin strips, to garnish

1 lime, cut in wedges, to serve

sea salt

ground black pepper

For the stock

1 small chicken or 2 meaty chicken legs

1 onion, quartered

2 cloves garlic, crushed

25g/1oz fresh root ginger, sliced

2 lemon grass stalks, cut in half lengthwise and bruised

2 dried red chillies

30ml/2 tbsp *nuoc mam*

