

Spicy Thai Broth

To start the broth:

- ½ onion, roughly chopped
- 2 tbsp lemongrass paste
- 1 thumb sized piece of ginger, roughly chopped
- 2 basil stems, crushed and roughly chopped
- 1 bunch's worth of cilantro stems, roughly chopped
- 3 cloves garlic, smashed
- 1 serrano chili, split in half and seeds left in
- Zest of 1 lime
- 3 cups chicken stock

To finish the broth:

- 1 can coconut milk
- Juice of 2 limes
- ½ cup sliced mushrooms
- 1 tbsp fish sauce
- 2 tsp brown or palm sugar
- 1 tbsp garlic-ginger paste
- 2 tbsp sambal olek or sriracha
- ½ cup fresh cilantro leaves, chopped
- ¼ cup fresh basil, chopped
- ¼ cup thinly sliced red onion
- 2 cloves garlic, thinly sliced
- ½ serrano or jalapeno chili, thinly sliced
- 1 tbsp Thai green curry paste



We've been a little under the weather in my household lately. Nothing serious, but colds and allergies have really taken their toll and we're tired. When this happens, I crave the spicy comfort of Thai soups.

This broth won't impress anyone from Thailand. It's far from authentic. There's no galangal, no palm sugar, no bird's eye chilies, and no kefir lime. It's an Americanized, best-effort at recreating something I used to be able to get and don't have access to anymore. But this is the broth that I crave when I'm feeling a bit ill and need a burn in my throat.

Adjust the spiciness to your preferred level. Red chilies look lovely in the broth against the green and white, so use those if you can find them.

This is just a broth. The only bulk comes from onions and mushrooms. Add in cooked chicken or poach a few shrimps in the broth if you want protein, and serve with cooked rice or rice noodles if you want carbs.

Combine all the ingredients for the broth in a large pot over medium-high heat. Allow to simmer until infused, about 40 minutes. Strain or fish out all the chunks and continue with the recipe below.

To the newly strained broth, add in the remaining ingredients, and warm gently on low heat (keep the heat low or else the coconut milk might curdle) until the greens are very bright, the mushrooms are lightly cooked, and the broth is very fragrant. It should only take a few minutes. Taste and adjust for spice, salt, acid, and sugar.

Serve at once. Preferably in a bowl that can be held with both hands. It does wonders to warm up chilly fingers.