

TO VEGETABLES
with love

Thai curry split peas

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There are many types and brands of Thai curry paste on the market and each will probably give you slightly different results so vary the amount you use according to the salty/spice level of the one you are using. I used a very commercially available [Thai Kitchen brand](#) which comes in a 4 ounce (113g) jar which is perfectly sized for this recipe.

Split peas take about an hour to cook and break down. If you have time, you could soak your split peas overnight or even just for a couple of hours which means they will soften slightly faster.

If you don't have split peas, use red lentils - it will cook much faster, closer to 25-30 minutes.

I've topped the split peas with roasted squash but you could top with any roasted veggies you like. Roasted cauliflower, broccoli, brussels sprouts or carrots would be really nice too.

Serves 4

extra virgin olive oil
2 small leeks, thinly sliced and washed
1 carrot, finely diced
1 stick celery, finely diced
sea salt and black pepper
450g (1 pound) pumpkin/squash such as koginut or butternut
About 100g / 4 ounces Thai curry paste (any colour)
2 cloves garlic, finely chopped
450g (1 1/2 cups) green or yellow split peas
2 liters (8 cups) vegetable stock
4 makrut lime leaves, thinly sliced (optional)
400ml / 13.5 ounce (1 can) coconut milk (well shaken)

To serve

1 lime, cut into wedges
Handful coriander/cilantro leaves
Crispy fried shallots

Preheat oven to 200°C / 400°F.

Heat a large Dutch oven or wide pot on medium for 2 minutes. When hot, drizzle with olive oil and add the leeks, carrots and celery. Add 1 teaspoon of sea salt, season with black pepper, and cook, stirring occasionally, until softened and starting to caramelize, 8-10 minutes.

Meanwhile, slice the squash into thin 1.25cm (1/2-inch) wedges (no need to peel thin skinned squash like butternut or kogi nut, but you can remove skin for thicker skinned acorn, Japanese, kabocha etc). Drizzle with olive oil, season with sea salt and black pepper and add 2 teaspoons of the Thai curry paste. Toss to coat - this is easiest done with hands - and then arrange into a single layer and roast until tender and caramelized on the edges, 20-22 minutes.

To the leeks, add the garlic and the remaining 3-4 tablespoons of Thai curry paste (if your paste is spicy, you can add less) and stir until fragrant, 1-2 minutes. Add the split peas and stock and increase the heat to bring the mixture to a simmer. Reduce heat to low for a slow simmer, cover and cook until the split peas are completely tender and fall apart willingly when stirred, 45-50 minutes. Turn off the heat and stir in 1/2 cup of coconut milk and the makrut lime leaves, if using.

When ready to serve, ladle the split peas into serving bowls, drizzle with coconut milk and squeeze over some lime. Top each bowl with the roasted squash/pumpkin, some coriander/cilantro and crispy fried shallots.