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FOOD ~ WINE ~ TRAVEL



Nuoc Mam Cham

Fish sauce is the essential condiment in Vietnamese cooking, as salt and pepper are in the west. A bottle sits on the table at every meal and at its simplest it's poured straight from that bottle. A little chopped chilli is typically served alongside and it's often blended with vinegar, sugar and lime juice to create this classic dipping sauce that's also used in dressings and marinades. Every cook has their own preference for the balance of sweet, sour and salty, so feel free to vary the ratios to suit your taste. This sauce will keep in the fridge for weeks without the garlic, chilli, and lime juice added. It's worth making a big batch of the basic mixture then, before serving, for each $\frac{1}{4}$ cup add 2 teaspoons lime juice, a pinch of garlic and $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon of pickled minced chilli, or serve chilli on the side for everyone to add their own.

Makes 1 cup



INGREDIENTS

- $\frac{1}{4}$ cup fish sauce
- $\frac{1}{4}$ cup rice vinegar
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup water
- 2 tablespoons castor sugar
- 2 tablespoons lime juice
- 2 teaspoons pickled minced chilli
- $\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon crushed garlic (about 1 small clove)

METHOD

1. Place fish sauce, vinegar, water and sugar in a saucepan over medium heat.
2. Stir well and bring to the boil, then immediately remove from the heat and set aside to cool.
3. Just before serving, stir in lime juice, chilli and garlic.