

## A Recipe From *The Spice Merchant's Daughter*

Chef and cooking teacher Christina Arokiasamy began her professional culinary training working in top restaurants in southeast Asia. But her love affair with cooking began when she was a child, inhaling the exotic aromas in a spice stall in Kuala Lumpur's Central Market presided over by her mother, "Doctor Masala."

There she absorbed the lore and fell prey to the lure of spices, learned about their nuances, and captured the secrets of cooking with masterfully blended rubs and seasonings. It's an education she shares in her lyrical book, *The Spice Merchant's Daughter: Recipes and Simple Spice Blends for the American Kitchen*, from which this gem of a recipe is drawn.

### Papaya and Prawn Salad

This salad is a favorite among my friends and students, who love how its beautifully balanced burst of sweet, sour, salty, and spicy flavors awakens their taste buds. A ripe Caribbean or Hawaiian papaya works best for this dish. Whichever you choose, prepare for absolute silence after the first forkful!

Serves 4

- 1 tablespoon fish sauce
- Juice of 2 limes
- 1½ tablespoons sugar
- 3 small shallots, thinly sliced
- 2 fresh red chiles, thickly sliced
- 10 ounces large prawns or shrimp, peeled and deveined
- ½ teaspoon salt
- 1 tablespoon vegetable oil
- 1 ripe medium papaya, peeled, seeded, and diced

- 1 ripe medium mango, peeled, pitted, and diced
- 1 cup fresh mint leaves, coarsely chopped
- 1 cup fresh cilantro leaves, coarsely chopped
- 2 tablespoons unsalted roasted peanuts, roughly chopped

1. Preheat the broiler. To prepare the sauce, combine the fish sauce, lime juice, sugar, shallots, and chiles in a small bowl. Whisk until the sugar dissolves. Allow the seasoning sauce to sit for 5 minutes for the flavors to infuse.

2. Mix the prawns, salt, and oil in a medium bowl. Arrange the prawns on a baking sheet and place on the top rack underneath the broiler until the prawns turn bright pinkish orange and shrink slightly, about 3 minutes. Remove the prawns from the oven. Let cool for 1 minute.

3. To serve the salad, combine the papaya, mango, mint, cilantro, sauce, and prawns with any juice from the pan and toss in a serving bowl. Garnish with chopped peanuts if desired.

**TD&N Nutrient Analysis:** Calories: 229; Total Fat: 7 g; Saturated Fat: 1 g; Polyunsaturated Fat: 3 g; Monounsaturated Fat: 2 g; Cholesterol: 105 mg; Sodium: 768 mg; Carbohydrates: 31 g; Fiber: 4 g; Protein: 15 g

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