

Galanga Root



3453 – PLU

Description/Taste

Galangal rhizomes widely vary in size and shape and have a cylindrical, branched appearance with many shoots and bulbous knobs. The semi-smooth skin is light brown to tan, firm, hard, and is covered in darker brown rings. Underneath the woody skin, the flesh is pale yellow to ivory and is fibrous, dense, and aqueous with a spicy, floral aroma. Galangal is crisp and has a pungent, earthy, woody, and mustard-like flavor with subtle citrus undertones.

Current Facts

Galangal, botanically classified as *Alpinia officinarum*, is the underground rhizome of a tropical shrub that belongs to the Zingiberaceae family. Also known as Siamese ginger and Thai ginger, there are two main species of Galangal known as Greater Galangal and Lesser Galangal, varying in size, shape, and taste, but both species are used to flavor culinary dishes. Galangal has been utilized for its medicinal properties in Asia for thousands of years and is predominately used today to flavor Southeast Asian cuisine. Galangal adds a warm, sweet, and pungent flavor to dishes, similar to ginger but stronger in flavor, and can be found in fresh, dried, and powdered form.

Nutritional Value

Galangal is high in fiber and is considered an aromatic stimulant that possesses tonic and antibacterial qualities which make it a useful ingredient in homeopathic remedies. The rhizome also contains essential oils, vitamin C, flavonoids, and has anti-inflammatory and anti-bacterial properties.

Applications

Galangal is primarily used in Southeast Asian cooking, lightly crushed or pounded as an aromatic to add an earthy and pungent flavor. The rhizome can be thinly sliced and added to stir-fries, boiled into curries, cooked into satay, mixed in applesauce, lightly tossed into salads, or used to flavor soups such as tom kha gai, a Thai coconut soup, or samlor kor ko, which is a Cambodian vegetable soup. It can also be used in stews, rice, and noodle dishes. Galangal is often mixed into seafood dishes as it has a flavor that can mask fishiness and is also commonly boiled into a tea. The rhizome can be found fresh or in dried and powdered form, and when ground, the flavor becomes milder but earthier. Galangal root pairs well with meats such as poultry and fish, shellfish, garlic, onions, tamarind, chiles, lemongrass, bell peppers, and green onions. The fresh rhizome will keep 1-2 weeks when stored in the refrigerator, and ground Galangal will keep up to one year when stored in a cool, dry, and dark place.

The Best Coconut Soup, Ever

Prep Time: 30 min
Cook Time: 30 min
Total Time: 60 min

Serves: 3-4

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Ingredients:

2 cans coconut milk
10 cilantro roots
6-7 stalks lemongrass
3 shallots
2-4 bird's eye / Thai chilies (to your taste)
50g / 1.75oz galangal root (or ginger)
50g / 1.75oz palm sugar (or coconut sugar)
12 kaffir lime leaves
generous handful of white button mushrooms, sliced
4 cloves garlic
juice of 3 limes
3 Tbsp. fish sauce (or tamari or salt to taste)
about 1 cup water (depending on the consistency of the coconut milk)



Directions:

1. Begin by preparing all the soup's ingredients. Wash the cilantro well in a bowl full of water, swishing the greens and roots around until completely free of dirt. Remove the upper portion of the stems, and setting them aside for garnish – we just want to use the roots here. Cut the lemongrass off where the white base portion ends and discard the tops. Pound the lemongrass until they are cracked and open. Slice the shallots. Peel and cut the galangal into chunks and pound it until it releases a little liquid. Tear the lime leaves into smaller pieces. Slice the mushrooms. Peel and smash the garlic.
2. In a medium saucepan, place the coconut milk, cilantro roots, lemongrass, shallots, chili, galangal, sugar, lime leaves, and garlic. Bring to a very gentle simmer and cook for about 15 minutes, with a lid on.
3. Strain soup through a sieve into another saucepan. Discard all solids. Add the sliced mushrooms, limejuice, fish sauce, and water until it is the right consistency. You want the soup to be light, but still creamy – this is up to you. Bring soup up to a light simmer again just to cook the mushrooms slightly. Do not boil. Season to taste and serve immediately with cilantro leaves, a slice of chili, extra lime and thinly sliced lime leaves. Serve with rice, if desired.