

# Vietnamese Sweet & Sour Catfish Soup with Celery (Canh Chua Ca Bong Lau Nau Can Tay)

Serves 3-5

## INGREDIENTS

### Fish

- 1 lb catfish (I typically use a whole catfish head and 1-2 catfish steaks)

### Soup

- 1-3/4 quarts water
- 2 tablespoons fish sauce
- 1 tablespoon chicken bouillon powder
- 3 tablespoons granulated sugar
- 3 oz tamarind pulp (dissolve in 1/3 cup hot water, strain and discard pulp)
- 1 teaspoon salt

### Vegetables / Other Ingredients

- 1 lb tomatoes (quarter)
- 1 lb celery (remove outside fibers and slice thinly at a diagonal)
- 2 tablespoons vegetable oil
- 6 garlic cloves (mince)
- 1 cup Thai basil leaves
- 2 Thai chili pepper (optional; slice thin)

## INSTRUCTIONS

1. At the bottom of medium-size stock pot, heat up vegetable oil on medium high. Add garlic and fry until golden. Remove garlic and set aside.
2. Add catfish and toss in aromatic garlic oil. Add water (1-3/4 quarts). Bring the pot it to a boil then reduce heat to a low simmer. Cook for 10 minutes. Occasionally, use a mesh or small spoon to scoop out any impurities (foam) that float to the top.
3. Season stock with fish sauce, chicken bouillon powder, sugar, strained tamarind pulp and salt.
4. Add celery and cook for 5 minutes (celery needs more cooking time than tomatoes). Add tomatoes. Cook for 1-2 minutes then turn off heat.
5. Top with basil, chili pepper and fried garlic.