



LAO

Larb Neua

COMPLEXITY	SERVES	PREP	COOK	TECHNIQUE	CUT
Basic	4	20 min	10 min	Pan-fry	Ground beef

Ingredients

- 500 g (1 lb) ground beef
- 2 tbsp uncooked sticky (glutinous) rice (or jasmine rice)
- 60 ml (¼ cup) water
- 3 tbsp fish sauce
- 4 tbsp fresh lime juice (about 2 limes)
- 1 tsp dried chilli flakes, to taste
- 1 tsp sugar
- 3 shallots, thinly sliced
- 3 spring onions, sliced
- 1 large handful mint leaves
- 1 large handful coriander (cilantro), chopped
- 1 stalk lemongrass, finely sliced (optional)
- To serve: sticky rice (or jasmine rice), lettuce leaves, cucumber and long beans (or green beans)

Steps

1. Toast the sticky rice in a dry skillet over medium heat for 5 minutes, shaking often, until deep golden. Grind in a mortar or spice grinder to a coarse powder.
2. Put the beef and water in a cold skillet. Set over medium-high heat and pan-fry for 6 to 8 minutes, breaking the meat up and stirring, until cooked through at 71°C (160°F) and no pink remains. The water keeps it tender.
3. Take the pan off the heat and let it cool for 2 minutes. Larb is served warm, not scorching.
4. Stir in the fish sauce, lime juice, chilli flakes and sugar. Taste: it should be salty, sour and spicy in balance.
5. Add the ground toasted rice, sprinkled in until the meat looks lightly coated and smells nutty.
6. Fold in the shallots, spring onions and lemongrass.
7. Add the mint and coriander last, tossing for 10 seconds so they stay bright green.
8. Serve warm or at room temperature with sticky rice and crisp vegetables, spooning it into lettuce cups.

Notes

- **Toasted rice:** this is the essential flavour of larb; grind a batch and store in a jar for a week.
- **Heat:** add fresh sliced bird's eye chillies (or serrano) for a Lao-style burn.
- **Make ahead:** best eaten right away, since the herbs wilt.