

Somtum Thai on Sasasunakku.com

This is somtum Thai as opposed to somtum bpuu which has fermented crabs in it and is, I think, pretty gross. I shredded my papaya on the medium setting of a mandolin - Thai ladies do it with their knives but unless you're a whizz at that sort of thing, I don't recommend it if you like your fingers. I think a grater might not really do the trick though, but if you try it let us know how it goes - if you really can't find papaya, try all carrot. This serves 2 or 3.

1/2 green papaya, shredded

1 carrot, shredded (optional, the papaya and/or carrot should add up to roughly 2 cups)

2 garlic cloves

1 tablespoon grated palm sugar or use white sugar

1 bird's eye chilli (or as many as you can handle)

The juice of one lime

2 tablespoons fish sauce

2 tablespoons raw peanuts, toasted in a dry pan until browned in patches

1 tablespoon dried shrimp (I couldn't get any)

4-8 cherry tomatoes, halved

Green beans, Thai basil, young cabbage leaves, cucumber slices (to serve alongside).

Pound the garlic, sugar and chilli together. Mix in the fish sauce and lime juice.

Add the papaya and/or carrot and mix by scooping up from the bottom with a large spoon and mashing down from the top with a pestle to force the juices into the vegetables.

Mix through the peanuts, shrimps if using and cherry tomatoes.

Serve with sticky rice and the other vegetables to take the edge off the heat of the chilli.