



CHEF'S EXPRESSIONS

fashionable catered events

THAI SALT PASTE

- 1/2 cup small dried Red Chilies such as Chiles de Arbor or Chipotle
- 1/2 cup peeled Shallots, cut lengthwise into chunks, about 3 ounces
- 1/4 cup peeled garlic cloves (8 to 10 large cloves)
- 1/2 cup Grape seed or Vegetable oil
- 3 tablespoons Brown Sugar
- 3 tablespoons Fish Sauce
- 5 teaspoons Salish or Smoked Salt**

Steep the Chilies in Boiling Water for 15 minutes. Remove from the water and transfer to a plate to cool.

In the vegetable oil, gently saute the Shallots and garlic Cloves until tender.

Stem the chilies and shake out and discard most of the seeds. Chop the chilies into small pieces. Combine the chilies, shallots, and garlic in a mini processor or blender and pulse to a coarse paste, stopping to scrape down the sides as needed. Add 1/4 cup of the vegetable oil and grind to a fairly smooth paste. Transfer to a small bowl and set aside.

Pour the remaining 1/4 cup oil into the wok or a skillet. Place over medium heat until a bit of the paste added to the pan sizzles at once, about 1 minute. Add the ground chili paste and cook, stirring occasionally, until the paste gradually darkens and releases a rich fragrance, about 5 minutes. Remove from the heat and set aside to cool to room temperature.

Combine the sugar, fish sauce and salt in a small bowl and stir well. Add this mixture to the cooled chili paste and stir to combine. The paste will be quite oily, and must be well stirred before each use. Transfer to a jar, cap tightly, and refrigerate for up to 1 month. Use at room temperature in recipes as a marinade or condiment.