

## Laksa

Here's one that is a Territory favourite at the local markets. Let's look at ways to make it a little healthier.

### Ingredients (Serves 4)

250g rice vermicelli

1 tbs peanut oil (Modification: Use 1 tsp of oil)

1/4 cup laksa paste

750ml (3 cups) vegetable stock (Modification: Use salt reduced stock)

400ml coconut milk (Modification: Try using 50g coconut milk powder mixed with 1 cup water)

8 green prawns, de-veined, shelled, tails on

200g chicken thigh (Modification: Use breast fillets)

4-8 pieces of deep-fried tofu (Modification: Use firm tofu)

1 cup bean sprouts, trimmed

1/2 cup each fresh coriander or Vietnamese mint

1 small red chilli, seeds removed, cut into thin strips

2 tbs chopped peanuts, to serve

Fried Asian shallots\*, to garnish (Modification: Can be omitted)

Salt to taste (Modification: Can be omitted)

### Method:

Place the vermicelli in a bowl, cover with hot water and leave for 10 minutes to soak. Drain and set aside.

Place oil in a wok over medium-high heat. Add the laksa paste and stir-fry for 1 minute. Stir in the stock, bring to the boil, then add the coconut milk and simmer for 2 minutes. Add the green prawns, chicken and tofu and cook for 2 minutes before adding salt.

Divide the noodles between serving bowls, top with the bean sprouts and the fresh herbs. Pour the laksa soup over the noodles, dividing the seafood and chicken equally among the bowls. Garnish with slices of chilli, peanuts, shallots and the extra fresh herbs.

### **Modifications & Tips:**

Making laksa paste requires many ingredients and can be hard to make from scratch. One of the core ingredient is 'belachan' (fermented shrimp paste), which can only be found at the Asian grocers. As such, I have opted for a ready-made laksa paste, which can be found at most supermarkets.

The other core ingredient in Laksa is coconut milk. It is high in calories, fat and saturated fat. The lowest fat alternative is Carnation milk with coconut essence. The other option to lower the fat content is mixing 50g of coconut milk water to 1cup of water.

Most ready-made laksa or curry pastes can have a lot of fat/oil already. As such, you can get away with not adding more oil to fry the paste. Even with the modifications, the laksa can still be quite high in fat, therefore this is one meal to have only occasionally.

Nutrient analysis per serve (post modification):

Energy: 2369kJ (564cal), total fat 24.5g, saturated fat 10g, protein 24.9g, carbohydrate 60g, fibre 1.3g, sodium (salt) 1117mg.

Recipe adapted from [www.taste.com.au](http://www.taste.com.au)