

Authentic Thai Food for the World

# Chicken Satay

Satisfying Taste, Nothing Can  
Take its Place



Picture: <http://nattanan2013.blogspot.com>

Chicken satay is a street food that anyone who walks past it must turn back for a second look. It has a good smell from many types of spices, nice and yellow grilled chicken, and 2 different flavors of sauce. Satay is the local food in many countries, including Thailand. However, before it became the satay we see today, it passed through the wisdom and meticulousness of Thai people from previous generations to become a unique and specific recipe.

Just by looking at the spices, we can guess that the origin of satay is not from our country. However, it is believed that the origin was from the kebab of Arabs due to its similar appearance. Then, the Indonesians adapted it until it became grilled meat drenched with sauce and spices and eaten with powdered peanut sauce and sour ajard. After that, this culture of deliciousness spread to other countries, like Malaysia, Singapore, and Philippines, including Thailand. The word “สะเต๊ะ” came from “Satay” in both Malay and Indonesia languages, which means grilled meat. Some places said it came from “Sae Bak” in Chinese, which means three pieces of meat. The first restaurant that made pork satay to sell in Thailand was “Chuang Ang Lak”, which has been open for more than 100 years now. Currently, it has succeeded to the 3rd generation and moved from Yaowarat to Rama 4 Road.

Thai satay has its own specific recipe that has been adapted into a palatable food for Thai people as well as foreigners. However, before it was the chicken satay on sticks that we see today with side dishes like ajard, satay sauce, and skull bread, it must pass the meticulous cooking procedures. Starting from mixing the chicken with the spices of galangal, lemongrass, coriander seeds, and cumin. Then, putting the chicken on sticks over medium heat and covering with coconut milk until the chicken is yellow color, soft, and smells of spices with salty and sweet flavors. Of course, it will not be fully delicious without the sauce. The sauce needs preparation time just like grilling the chicken. The ajard consists of sugar, salt, and vinegar with cucumbers, sliced shallot, and sliced cayenne pepper. The satay sauce must consist of undiluted coconut milk, coriander seeds, cumin, and turmeric. Then, it is simmered until the curry smells good and the coconut milk floats up and gives it a mellow flavor.

The main raw materials of the chicken satay is certainly the chicken meat. The chicken meat can absorb the spices well and has nutritional value. It is a source of protein like red meat but with less fat and energy. It is easier to digest because chicken muscle is short, especially the breast, which is used to make the satay and has high protein but a fat content of only 8.2%. The chicken meat also has Vitamin B3 or Niacin that nurtures the nervous system and the brain. Moreover, the chicken meat not only has a complete set of benefits with good protein, vitamins, and low calories, the spices used to marinate or simmer to make the sauce also have many benefits as well.

The yellow turmeric on the chicken meat produces a soft smell that gets rid of any fishy smell from the chicken meat, and is also a source of many vitamins and minerals, like Vitamin A, Vitamin B Complex, Vitamin C, Vitamin E, Calcium, Phosphorus, and Iron. According to folk medicine, turmeric can mitigate diarrhea due to its effect of getting rid of bacteria that causes diarrhea. It can also reduce the level of cholesterol in our body. Furthermore, turmeric can increase the effectiveness of blood circulation and allow the body to carry adequate oxygen to other parts of the body, especially the brain. Therefore, it can reduce the risk of memory disorder. This is not including other spices that are used to prepare the satay, all of which have nutritional value and medical properties as well.

Chicken satay is considered to be a complete menu with 2 types of full-flavored sauces that include oily peanuts with spices seeped into the chicken meat, or the ajard with the crisp of cucumbers, pungency of shallots, and mild spice from cayenne peppers. Though it is a menu that we got from other nations, we are also proud of the Thai wisdom that combined all the little details together to make the chicken satay we enjoy today.

