

One of our family's favourite soups is Hot & Sour Soup, slightly spicy, sweet & sour with just a few ingredients; this is perfect for a light meal. There are some additions that do make it more authentic, but even this very basic version makes for a very happy meal. I can remember many busy school nights when this was served, always leaving us satisfied!

### *Hot & Sour Soup*

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#### **Ingredients**

3 c chicken or vegetable stock  
1/3 c lime juice  
2 T fish sauce  
2 T brown sugar  
1" piece of ginger  
2 T Roasted Red Chili Paste  
8 mushrooms  
1/2 onion (cut lengthwise, root to stalk)  
1 lb large sized shrimp (peeled)  
1/4 cup loosely packed cilantro leaves

#### **Directions**

In a medium pot, mix the stock, lime juice, fish sauce, sugar, and ginger.  
Bring to a boil, lower to a simmer, and cook for 15 minutes.  
Slice the mushrooms into thick slices - about 4 slices per  
Slice the half onion very thinly crosswise - about 1/8" thick  
Add in the chili paste, stirring until it has broken down and become part of the soup base.  
Add in the mushroom pieces and the onion slices.  
Bring back to a boil, lower to a simmer, and cook for another 15 minutes.  
Remove the ginger.  
Add in the shrimp, and cook until just opaque.  
Stir in the cilantro just before serving.

#### **Additions:**

3" of lemongrass, hit crosswise with the edge of a wooden spoon to separate the strands. Add in with the ginger; remove at the same time as the ginger.

Instead of shrimp, use 1/2 lb of tofu cut into cubes. Add in 5 minutes before serving.

Instead of shrimp, use 1 lb of cut up chicken. Add in at the same time as the mushrooms & onion.

Use shitake instead of white mushrooms. Try other mushrooms!

Add in 3 finely chopped green onions 5 minutes before serving.

Note: buy Fish Sauce and Roasted Red Chili Paste in the Asian aisle of the supermarket.