ต้มข่าไก่

Tom Kha Gai - Chicken soup with galangal and coconut



Own image (AI-generated)

THA-002 | 4 servings | Difficulty 2/5

Archived estimate: Approx. 30 min

Curry soup / **ต้ม** | Thailand, Central Thailand

The 30-minute kitchen plan covers the soup with boneless chicken; rice and thawing are additional.

Planning estimate for the soup based on the archived steps. Rice served separately is not included in this time estimate.

Before you cook

Authenticity and sources

Tom kha gai (**ต้มข่าไก่**) combines chicken with galangal and coconut milk. This version combines sources: the main chicken, mushroom and coconut quantities match Wongnai, while cooking in thin coconut milk and adding cream late follows the Mahidol sequence. Galangal weight, fish sauce and lime juice remain editorial archive amounts. This is not an exact translation of a single original recipe. Lime is added at the end for fresh flavour; cooking does not inevitably make it bitter.

Timing and preparation

Planning estimate for the soup based on the archived steps. Rice served separately is not included in this time estimate.

Ingredient clarification

Base recipe for four servings: weigh raw boneless, skinless chicken and trimmed or drained mushrooms. Measure thin coconut milk and cream separately: together 800 ml coconut base, not a guaranteed soup yield. Measure lime juice and add seasonings gradually. Rice is separate.

Ingredients (metric)

Main ingredients

400 g	Chicken thigh meat - **สะโพกไก่** - raw weight without bones or skin here; an editorial working basis
200 g	Straw mushrooms - **เห็ดฟาง** - trimmed fresh weight; drained weight if canned

Coconut base

500 ml	Thin coconut milk - **หางกะทิ** - base recipe: 500 ml ready-to-use second pressing, with no extra water counted on top; no universal dilution ratio
300 ml	Coconut cream - **หัวกะทิ** - unsweetened first pressing, added at the end; additional to the thin coconut milk, not taken from it

Aromatics and seasoning

40 g	Young galangal - **ข่าอ่อน** - trimmed weight, thinly sliced; hard pieces are for infusing flavour only
3 stalks	Lemongrass - **ตะไคร้** - bruised, in 3-cm pieces
6 leaves	Makrut lime - **ใบมะกรูด** - leaves torn
10 g	Thai bird's-eye chillies - **พริกขี้หนู** - use the gram weight; 8-10 pieces is approximate for the base recipe only. Lightly crush and adjust heat to taste
30 ml	Fish sauce - **น้ำปลา** - 2 tbsp, to taste
45 ml	Lime juice - **น้ำมะนาว** - measure juice after squeezing, not by a fixed fruit count; add gradually after heating, up to the measured allowance
0.5 tsp	Salt - **เกลือ** - add gradually; some may remain unused if the fish sauce is salty
Not specified	Coriander - **ผักชี** - for sprinkling

Method

01 Prepare

Cut the chicken into even bite-sized pieces. Thinly slice the galangal; bruise the lemongrass and cut into 3-cm lengths. Remove tough midribs from the lime leaves and tear the leaves. Trim and halve fresh mushrooms or drain canned ones. Lightly bruise the chillies and place them in the measured lime juice.

02 Heat the thin coconut milk

Stir the thin coconut milk and bring it to a gentle boil. Avoid prolonged vigorous boiling; Mahidol does not prohibit bringing thin coconut milk to a boil.

03 Add the aromatics

Add galangal and lemongrass with a small portion of the measured salt. Simmer briefly until fragrant. Keep the lime leaves for the later cream addition.

04 Cook the chicken

Add the chicken, return the soup to a gentle simmer and cook without interruption. Check at least 74 °C in the thickest piece; check several if sizes vary. A stated cooking time alone does not establish doneness.

05 Mushrooms and fish sauce

Add fresh mushrooms and simmer until cooked; thoroughly heat through pre-cooked canned mushrooms. Add fish sauce gradually from the measured allowance. Do not automatically use all of it.

06 Stir in the coconut cream

Reduce the heat and stir in the lime leaves and unsweetened coconut cream. Heat gently throughout and remove from the heat. Adding cream late is the Mahidol method chosen here; Wongnai describes a different sequence.

07 Balance with lime

Stir in the chilli-infused lime juice gradually. Taste and adjust with the remaining fish sauce and salt allowance. More acidic or saltier products may leave some unused; do not assume additional quantities.

08 Serve

Scatter with coriander and serve hot. Set aside lemongrass and tough galangal or leaf pieces when eating. Only genuinely tender young galangal is edible. Prepare jasmine rice separately if wanted; it is not included in the soup timing.

Archivist’s notes

Source scope: Wongnai lists 400 g chicken, 200 g mushrooms, 300 ml coconut cream and 500 ml thin milk. Mahidol describes a larger batch for 10 people. The archive version is not a proportional conversion of that Mahidol recipe.

Different seasoning: Wongnai uses 1 tbsp fish sauce and juice from one lime. Our archive allowance is 30 ml fish sauce and 45 ml juice. Fruit yield is unknown; the amounts cannot be equated exactly. Portion changes scale ingredient rows, not these source-comparison values.

Chicken basis: the former bone reference was ambiguous. The weight is now explicitly used for raw boneless, skinless meat. Mahidol uses bone-in chicken; this specification is an editorial clarification.

Coconut and lime: thin milk can reach a gentle boil. Mahidol adds cream late; Wongnai starts with cream. According to Mahidol, soaking chillies in lime juice is intended to stop the chillies darkening, not to keep the entire broth white. Late acid addition preserves freshness.

The 30-minute plan is a working guide for the soup with prepared boneless meat; rice and thawing are additional. The former gluten-free tag lacked product checks and has been removed. Finished weight and nutrition have not been measured.

Quantity basis: Four servings are the editorial division of this soup. The 500 ml thin coconut milk and 300 ml cream make 800 ml coconut liquid added, not 800 ml finished soup. Counts of stalks and leaves are not verified gram equivalents. Fish sauce, salt and lime juice remain allowances to add gradually; some may be left. Discarded aromatics, evaporation and finished yield have not been measured; rice is separate.

Alternatives usable in Europe

Buy fresh or frozen galangal at an Asian grocery. Ginger has a different aroma. Use older, tough galangal slices only to infuse flavour.

Use canned straw mushrooms by drained weight. Oyster mushrooms or small button mushrooms are fallbacks; cook fresh substitutes fully.

Prefer fresh or frozen makrut lime leaves. Ordinary lime zest only partly replaces their aroma.

Obtain unsweetened coconut cream and thin coconut milk separately; sweetened cocktail cream is unsuitable. Canned products vary in fat content, so do not assume a universal water ratio for dilution.

Use Thai bird’s-eye chillies; other fresh chillies with adjusted heat are a fallback. Check the fish sauce ingredients before making an allergen claim.

Nutrition

Not calculated. Earlier unverified archive estimates are preserved in the audit archive and no longer displayed as nutrition values. Missing values do not mean zero.

Not calculated: product data, quantities actually eaten and measured finished weight are missing. Side dishes are excluded.

Nutrient	Per 100 g	per portion
Energy	not calculated	not calculated
Protein	not calculated	not calculated
Fat	not calculated	not calculated
Carbohydrate	not calculated	not calculated
Salt	not calculated	not calculated

Documented sources

Quantity decision dated 20 October 2026, based on the documented Thai source comparison of 16 October 2026. Source roles and historical access dates are retained. No new research or cooking trial. Editorial weight definitions clarify the existing home version; not all amounts are exact source conversions.

01 สถาบันโภชนาการ มหาวิทยาลัยมหิดล - ต้มข่าไก่

Thai | Accessed 22 July 2026

Open original source

02 Wongnai - Tom Kha Gai

Thai | Accessed 16 October 2026

Open original source

03 FoodSafety.gov - Safe Minimum Internal Temperatures

English · supplementary food safety | Accessed 16 October 2026

Open original source

Keywords: Thailand, Chicken, Coconut milk, Galangal, Soup, Tom Kha Gai, Curry soup