

Yippee Thai Yay!

USA Peanuts Steak Their Claim

(NAPSA)—While peanuts have been highly featured in ethnic cuisines for centuries, they are becoming increasingly popular in mainstream restaurant menus across the U.S. From Mexico to Asia, peanuts' culinary versatility has helped to influence and inspire dishes that highlight this all-American food while also celebrating the diverse flavors of world cuisines.

For celebrated Chef Mai Pham of the nationally acclaimed Lemon Grass Restaurant in Sacramento, Calif., and award-winning cookbook author, U.S.A. peanuts and peanut butter are aromatic, flavor- and texture-building ingredients that she always has on hand in her own kitchen.

“Peanuts provide a wonderful array of textures and flavor possibilities that make them a very versatile ingredient—not just in the Asian custom—but for any kitchen, including the American kitchen,” Chef Pham explains.

Chef Pham's Thai Cowboy Steak with Peanut Sauce—a favorite among her regular patrons—shows how peanut sauce can be used to jazz up steak dishes.

THAI COWBOY STEAK WITH PEANUT SAUCE

Serves 4

- 2 cloves garlic, sliced**
- 3 fresh cilantro sprigs, chopped**
- 2 teaspoons oyster sauce**
- 1 teaspoon soy sauce**



- 1 tablespoon brandy**
- 4 (10- to 12- ounce) New York steaks (about 1 inch thick), each cut in half**
- ½ cup Peanut Sauce (see recipe)**

Place the garlic and cilantro in a mortar and pound into a paste. (Or you can finely chop by hand.) Transfer to a mixing bowl and stir in the oyster sauce, soy sauce, and brandy. Add the steaks and marinate for about 1 hour.

Preheat the broiler or grill to medium high. Grill the steaks to the desired doneness, about 3 to 5 minutes on each side for medium rare. (You also may pan-sear the steaks.)

To serve, place 2 to 3 tablespoons of Peanut Sauce on a plate, top with two pieces of steak. Serve with a side of cucumber salad or vegetables.

Per serving without sauce: 461

calories, 22g fat (8g sat., 9g mono.), 163mg cholesterol, 237mg sodium, 1g carb., 0g fiber, 60g protein.

THAI PEANUT SAUCE

Makes about 1 cup

- ⅔ cup coconut milk**
- ½ tablespoon Thai red curry paste**
- 3 tablespoons creamy peanut butter**
- ¼ cup water**
- 2 tablespoons finely chopped roasted peanuts**
- ½ tablespoon palm or cane sugar**
- ½ tablespoon fish sauce or to taste**
- ¼ teaspoon lime juice**

Place one-half of the coconut milk in a small saucepan and heat over moderate heat. Stir until the coconut is bubbly and fragrant, about 10 seconds. Stir in curry paste. Add the remaining coconut milk, peanut butter, water, chopped roasted peanuts, sugar, fish sauce and lime juice. Simmer 2 to 3 minutes, stirring constantly. Check for a nice balance of salty, sweet, sour and spicy flavors.

Per 1 tablespoon: 45 calories, 4g fat (2g sat., 1g mono.), 0mg cholesterol, 67mg sodium, 2g carb., 0g fiber, 1g protein.

For more recipes, visit the National Peanut Board Web site at www.nationalpeanutboard.org.