

The month of April marks the Songkran Festival, a traditional Thai New Year that begins on April 13 every year and lasts from between three to 10 days. The Songkran is also known as a water festival, and since it is the hottest season of the year, Thais celebrate by sprinkling or splashing water on one another. Songkran was customarily a time to visit family and friends, where the elders were actually given a bath and clothed in new apparel presented by the young ones as a token of respect for the New Year.

tom yam talay (tom yam seafood)

serves 4

4 prawns, shelled
4 pcs fish fillet
4 pcs squid
8 straw mushrooms
1 stalk lemongrass
1 thumb-length pc *galangal*
2 kaffir lime leaves
5 pcs chilli padi
2½ tbsp lime juice
2 tbsp fish sauce
1 tsp chilli oil
600 ml water

1. Place all ingredients in a claypot and boil for 3 minutes until cooked. Serve immediately with steamed rice.



Executive chef of Lerk Thai, Naisuntorn Thosaphol (Choi Kor), had his first taste of cooking at 18. He had the privilege of helping his grandmother in the Thai royal kitchen then. Ever since, he has honed his skill for Thai and Chinese cuisines through the region. Besides stints in Bangkok restaurants, including the Grand Hyatt and Montien Hotel, his 40 plus years of experience has also seen him venturing through the scene in Shenzhen, China, refining methods in Teochew-style Chinese cuisine.