



Photography: Kenneth Theysen

PORK DUMPLINGS

WRAPPED IN SHISO LEAVES

Purple basil and bright green cilantro grow alongside *galangal*, turmeric and hot peppers in the patio garden boxes at *Lemongrass* restaurant in the Limegrove Lifestyle Centre.

by Chef **Fazula Alli-Weekes**
of **Lemongrass Noodle Bar & Grill**

Chef Fazula Alli-Weekes uses the freshly plucked leaves for her *pad kee mao* with thick rice noodles, peppers, eggplant and chicken or shrimp as well as to liven up a lime dressing for seared tuna *tataki*.

Derick, the local farmer from *Lemongrass'* own *Future Green Farms*, grows the refreshingly bitter Japanese *shiso* leaves that make this recipe a hit. Alli-Weekes also loves the dish because it's easy to make. Originally from Guyana, she's called Barbados home for more than 30 years and has been working at *Lemongrass* since it opened eight years ago.

She loves her adopted home country, especially its food. "It's beautiful here. It's warm. I love the people, the culture and the things you can grow here", she says.

And pretty much everything tropical grows easily here, including a greens mix of curly endive, chard, microgreens, red oak lettuce, watercress and *frisée* from *Future Green Farms* that Alli-Weekes uses daily at the restaurant. Chard, lettuce and kale are also good stand-ins for the *shiso* leaves if you can't find them at a local grocery store when you make this dish yourself. On island, however, you can always place an order with the farm then pick up the *shiso* at *Lemongrass*.

You can buy teriyaki sauce, or freshen up a commercial bottle with *mirin* and chopped ginger. Or swap out the teriyaki sauce for soy sauce or hoisin or a home-made combination of soy sauce with a little *mirin*, sugar, sesame oil and minced garlic and ginger. As the chef says, "Some people like a little bitterness, some people like sweet". But the best is when they're combined, making this recipe bittersweet perfection.

FAZULA ALLI-WEEKES

Chef – Lemongrass Noodle Bar & Grill

Pork Dumplings Wrapped in Shiso Leaves

Serves 4

INGREDIENTS

- 4 oz. (115 g) ground pork
- 4 spring onions, green parts only, diced
- ¼ tsp. (1 g) salt
- Pinch of ground black pepper
- ½ tsp. (2 g) freshly chopped garlic
- 1 tbsp. (15 ml) olive oil
- 8 large *shiso* leaves

Instructions

1. Combine the ground pork with the spring onions, salt, pepper and garlic.
2. Divide the filling into four balls then roll each out to the shape of cigars, about the width of your palm. They shouldn't be longer than the width of the *shiso* leaves.
3. Heat a non-stick frying pan over medium-high heat. Add the olive oil then the four dumplings.
4. Turn them every 10 seconds or so by shaking the pan or by using a spatula, pressing down gently until they're seared on the outside and cooked through, about 4-5 minutes.
5. To assemble, wrap each dumpling in a *shiso* leaf. The heat should keep them closed, but place them seam side down on a plate to make sure they cooperate.
6. To serve, slice the *shiso*-wrapped dumplings in half on a diagonal to reveal the filling inside. Splash them with teriyaki sauce or serve the sauce on the side.



TIPS

1. To roll dumplings like a pro, place a seared pork dumpling at the tip of each *shiso* leaf and roll the dumpling over itself. "Two rolls and it's done. The heat of the pork seals it", says Alli-Weekes.
2. Use the biggest *shiso* leaves you can find and remove any rough stems at the bottom.
3. You can use ground chicken, lamb or beef instead of the pork.
4. To turn this into a main course, serve it with rice or egg noodles.



ENHANCED TERIYAKI SAUCE

- 10 oz. (300 ml) water
- 6 oz. (175 ml) teriyaki sauce
- 4 tsp. (20 ml) *mirin*
- A thumb-sized piece of ginger, finely chopped

1. Bring all the ingredients to a boil in a small saucepan and cook the mix until it reduces to the consistency you want. You can keep it runny or make it thick and glossy.