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FOOD

Thai-inspired sauces make for easier (but more thrilling) weeknights

By Ann Trieger Kurland Globe Correspondent, Updated April 25, 2023, 12:45 p.m.



The new stir-fry and dipping sauces from Watcharee's, a Maine company. The sauces are made in Thailand.DARREN SETLOW/WATCHAREE'S

Watcharee's intensely flavored Thai sauces can give any plain dish an exciting South Asian twist, whether grilled fish, leftover chicken, or noodles.

The Maine start-up has catapulted into a national brand with its four varieties of sauces — Pad Thai, green and massaman curries, and peanut sauce. Watcharee Limanon, the company's founder, grew up in Thailand and learned to cook traditional Thai foods at her mother's side. Initially, she worked as an environmental lawyer, but her career path turned toward cooking, and she studied at culinary schools in Bangkok.

Almost 20 years ago, Limanon came to the United States with her husband and two sons and lives on Cousins Island in Casco Bay. She has now launched a line of six Thai-inspired dipping and stir-fry sauces created in Thailand from fresh, traditional ingredients: Thai Sweet Chili and a Spicy Chili, Thai Lemongrass & Chili, Pad Thai, Thai Sweet & Sour, and Thai Basil & Garlic. The sauces are versatile, too, and come in handy for stir fries, grilling, salads, and vegetable dips.

In creating her latest products, Limanon said she wanted to make easy dishes more thrilling for busy home cooks while sharing flavors of her homeland (\$5.49 each).

The dipping and stir-fry sauces are available at Hannaford locations. Watcharee's original line is sold at Stop & Shop, Wegmans, and Whole Foods selected locations.