

## Salubong

One of the Easter practices unique to the Philippines and other countries influenced by Spanish conquistadores is the celebration of the *salubong*. The word *salubong* refers to the act of meeting someone who is arriving. As the word connotes, the celebration is a reenactment of the first meeting of Christ and his mother, Mary.

This is not written in the Bible, but the Filipinos' natural affinity to their mothers tell them that if there is someone to whom Christ will show himself first after his resurrection, it must be to his mother who loved him so much. This explanation is quite reasonable. St. Ignatius himself seems to have the same logic in his Spiritual Exercises (SpEx) when he highlighted this event by making it first among the contemplations of the Fourth week of the Exercises. He writes, "rising again, he appeared in body and soul to his Blessed Mother" (SpEx [219]). He explained that, "Although this is not stated in Scripture, still it is considered as understood by the statement that he appeared to many others." (SpEx [299]).

Participating therefore in the *salubong*, is an actual contemplation of the consoling effect of Christ's Resurrection. And it is true, the grace that people get from this celebration is nothing but exuding joy - perhaps sharing the same joy that Mary had experienced when Christ appeared to her. In this celebration, one feels and experiences that Jesus is indeed alive and he is in our midst!

"The celebration starts at dawn just before sunrise, with two different processions that start at different points. The first one consists of the icon of the risen Christ carried by men while the second consist of the Blessed Virgin Mary (covered with a black veil to denote her mourning) carried by women.

Precisely at first light of sunrise, the two processions meet at the church courtyard from different routes. At the center of the courtyard, the icon of Jesus is faced with the icon of Mary under a canopy (Pallo). At this point, the ceremony of the meeting begins with the choir singing alleluias as Mary approaches Jesus. Under the canopy, an angel descends on top of the head of Mary and lifts the black veil from her, exposing a happy mother who is seeing her son.

Uproar of Jubilations is heard from the crowd and confetti fills the air and the choirs would hail the Risen Christ and sing songs of joy. Then the 'Dawn Mass' is said to the crowd at the courtyard. At the end of the mass, various activities, like a fiesta begins, to celebrate the victory of our resurrection."

If there is one dish that really deserves to be in every Filipino Easter fiesta, it must be the *Lumpiang Ubod* (Coconut Spring Rolls). The main ingredient is taken from coconut shoots, which lends itself to the easter theme of new life and freshness. The following recipe that I will share here is not original to me, however, be rest assured that I tried to incorporate my own ideas like including *buko* (young coconut) as one of the main ingredient, and using rice as starch for the spring roll wrapper. The measurements and instructions are still sketchy-- i find some of the steps in making this dish better shown than written.



## Lumpiang Ubod w/ Buko

### INGREDIENTS

#### For the filling

- 2 - 3 tbsp. cooking oil
- 50 gms. cooked chicken breast
- 50 gms. cooked shrimps (small size; sliced)
- 1/2 cup julienned carrots
- 1/2 cup julienned young coconut meat
- 1/2 cup julienned coconut shoots
- 1/2 cup chicken stock
- 1 tsp. minced garlic
- salt and pepper to taste

#### For the wrapper / crepe

- 3 tbsp rice (soaked in 1/4 cup water overnight and then ground)
- 1 medium sized egg
- 1/4 cup of water

### PROCEDURE



#### For the filling:

1. Saute garlic until golden brown.
2. Add in coconut shoots and carrots. Saute for about 2 minutes.
3. Add the chicken and shrimp.
4. Add the chicken stock and simmer for another 3 minutes.

5. The young coconut may be added during the last minute of simmering.
6. Drain extra liquid and transfer to a bowl. Reserve the liquid for the sauce.

For the spring roll wrapper:

1. Combine water and ground rice in a food processor. Blend well.



2. Blend in the egg. You may add a little parsley or celery for color and extra flavor.
3. Put you medium sized non-stick pan on low heat.
3. Put an amount of crepe mixture into medium sized non stick pan just enough to cover the area.
4. Cook the mixture as you cook an ordinary crepe or pan cake.

For the sauce:

1. Mix 2 -3 tablespoons of flour to 1/4 cup of water.
2. Add in the extra liquid drained from the filling.
3. Simmer over medium heat until the mixture thickens.
4. You may add some fresh minced garlic and parsley.

Assembly:

1. You may put a leaf of lettuce on top of the crepe.
2. You may also put some ground peanuts with a little sugar on the crepe (this is practiced in my hometown)
3. Put two tablespoons of filling on top of your crepe, assemble it 3 - 4 inches long.
4. Gently but tightly roll the crepe. Using a sushi roller might help yield a good roll. Another way is to put the crepe on top of wax paper, and roll the wax paper as you roll a news paper on your hands.