Chicken and Noodle Soup (Sen Mee Gai)

Nothing like its namesake which comes out of a packet, this one has real slices of chicken and the tang of fresh herbs. Serves 6

1.5 L (6 cups) chicken Soup Stock 1 whole chicken breast 2 tsp Pepper and Coriander Paste 2 tsp fish sauce 1 cup fresh bean sprouts, trimmed 1/2 cup sliced spring onions (scallions) 125 g rice vermicelli, soaked for 10 minutes in hot water 1 or 2 sliced red or green chillies (to taste) coriander leaves to garnish

Make the stock, and when it is almost ready slide the chicken breast into the pan and simmer very gently for 6-8 minutes. Turn off the heat and let the chicken remain in the liquid until quite cool, then remove any skin and bones and with a sharp knife cut the meat into neat slices.

Reheat the stock and stir in the pepper and coriander paste, fish sauce, bean sprouts and the spring onions. Add the drained rice vermicelli and heat through, stir in the chicken slices and serve garnishes with chilli slices and coriander leaves.

Source: Charmaine Solomon's Thai Cookbook: A Complete Guide to the World's Most Exciting Cuisine (1989), Viking, Ringwood, Vic.