

VIETNAMESE COOKING CLASS

STEAMED RICE ROLLS / BANH CUON

INGREDIENTS

Batter:

- 1 cup rice flour
- 1 cup tapioca starch
- 2 cups room temperature water
- 2 cups boiling water
- 1/4 tsp salt
- 1 Tbsp vegetable oil

Filling

- 1/2 oz dried wood ear mushroom slivers (also called black fungus)
- 1/2 medium yellow onion, approximately 4 oz
- 3/4 lb ground pork*
- 1/4 tsp salt
- 1/4 tsp ground black pepper

*For the vegetarian version, replace pork with 14 oz extra firm tofu and add ¼ tsp mushroom seasoning

Other Ingredients and Accompaniments

- vegetable oil for cooking
- bean sprouts, trimmed and washed
- 1 cucumber
- fresh herbs: mint, cilantro and Thai basil, plucked and washed
- steamed pork roll (replace with fried tofu for the vegetarian version)
- fried onions
- fish sauce dipping sauce or soy dipping sauce

DIRECTIONS

Making the Batter

1. In a large cup or bowl, combine the rice flour, tapioca starch with the room temperature water and boiling water. Whisk for a few minutes combining well. Let the batter rest for 30 minutes.

2. After resting, the batter will separate with the flours settling on the bottom and a clear liquid on the top.
3. Carefully pour out just the clear liquid from the top into a measuring cup. Make note of the amount poured out and then discard this liquid.
4. Measure out the same amount of fresh water and pour into the batter. Add the salt and vegetable oil into the batter. Mix well.

Making the Filling

1. Soak the dried wood ear mushrooms in a bowl of warm water for 10 minutes. Drain well and then finely chop.
2. Finely dice the yellow onion.
3. Season the ground pork with salt and pepper and then mix well.
4. If using tofu, press the tofu by placing it on a plate with paper towels or clean dish towels below and above the tofu then place a heavy item on top like canned food. Let it sit for about 20 minutes. Then, crumble the tofu with your hands. Season the tofu with salt, pepper, and mushroom seasoning.
5. Heat a wok over Medium Low heat. When hot add the ground pork or tofu and wood ear mushrooms.
6. Cook for 5-6 minutes stir constantly. Use a spatula to break the meat into small pieces. Add the diced onions and cook for another 2 minutes. Transfer the filling into a clean bowl.

Making the Steamed Rice Rolls

1. Brush vegetable oil onto the work surface. Heat an 8 inch non-stick skillet over Low heat until hot and then lightly oil.
2. Pour 1/8 cup batter into the hot skillet. Swirl the skillet to coat it evenly with the batter. Cover with a lid and cook for 45 – 60 seconds. Remove the lid and flip the pan over the work surface to remove the cake.
3. Allow to cool for 1 minute. Place a heaping tablespoonful of the meat filling at the top of the cake. Fold over the sides and then roll-up the cake. Repeat these steps to make the remaining rolled cakes.

Assembling the Steamed Rice Rolls Dish

1. Dunk the bean sprouts in boiling water for 1 minute. Remove and drain well.
2. Cut the cucumbers into 1/8 inch slices and then into thin strips. Coarsely chop all herbs. Cut the steamed pork roll into thin slices. Arrange the bean sprouts, cucumbers, fresh herbs and steamed pork roll on a large plate.
3. To serve, place a few rice rolls on a plate. Top with the bean sprouts, cucumbers, fresh herbs and a few slices of steamed pork roll or fried tofu. Top with the fried onions. Serve with a generous side of sauce dipping sauce.

Yields: 30-35 rolls, 4-6 servings

Modified recipe from <https://runawayrice.com/main-dishes/savory-rolled-cakes-banh-cuon/>

DIPPING SAUCE

INGREDIENTS

- 6 tbsp. water
- 2 tbsp. sugar
- 1.5 to 2 tbsp. fresh lime or lemon juice
- 2 tbsp. fish sauce or soy sauce
- Finely chopped garlic or use a garlic press
- Bird's eye / Thai chiles

DIRECTIONS

1. Combine water and sugar in a bowl. Use warm water for easier dissolving.
2. Add lime or lemon juice in increments until you like how it tastes.
3. Add fish sauce or soy sauce in small increments until you like how it tastes. It should be a little strong since it goes on unseasoned food.
4. Top with garlic and chilies and serve.

Modified recipe from <https://www.hungryhuy.com/vietnamese-dipping-fish-sauce-recipe-nuoc-cham-nuoc-mam-cham/>

VIETNAMESE FRUIT COCKTAIL (Chè Thái)

INGREDIENTS

- 1 can of jackfruit
- 1 can of lychee
- 1 can of longan
- 1 can of toddy palm
- 1 jar of coconut jelly, drained (buy the brands in the glass jars)
- 1 can of green (ai-yu) jelly (diced into small cubes and drained)
- 2 cups of whole milk
- 2 cups of coconut milk
- ice (crushed preferred)

DIRECTIONS

1. Remove the jack fruit, lychee, longan, and toddy palm from the can and save the syrup. Slice the fruits into smaller pieces.
2. In a large fruit punch bowl add the fruits along with its accompanying syrup.
3. Drain the coconut jelly and green jelly and add to the mixture.
4. When ready to serve, mix the whole milk and coconut milk. You can adjust the proportion of each of them to fit your palate. Add them to the mixture to your desired level of richness and stir everything together. Serve cold. You can refrigerate the mixture until cold or just add ice to the punch bowl.

Modified recipe from <https://www.theravenouscouple.com/2010/07/che-thai-recipe-vietnamese-fruit-cocktail.html>