

SINGAPOREAN SIGNATURE DISHES

Hainanese Chicken Rice - Serves 4

Chicken

1 whole chicken (3.5 to 4 lbs), washed, enclosed giblets, extra fat and tail removed
10 slices of fresh ginger, about 1/16-inch thick
6 stalks green onions (whole, with end root removed)
10 cloves fresh garlic
½ tbsp salt
1 tbsp sesame oil
Water to cover chicken
Ice

Rice

2 tbsp vegetable oil
3 tbsp ground ginger & garlic
2 cups Thai Jasmine or long-grain uncooked rice
½ tsp salt
1 tsp sesame oil
2 cups chicken stock

Flavoring Sauce

2 tbsp light soya sauce
4 tbsp water
1 tsp sesame oil

Chili Garlic Sauce

4 tbsp ground chili
4 cloves garlic, minced
1 tbsp ground ginger or minced ginger
2 tsp sugar
¼ tsp salt
1 tbsp lime juice or ½ tbsp vinegar

1 large cucumber, peeled, sliced in half and then on the bias

Other Condiments

Dark soya sauce
Grated or ground fresh ginger, mixed with a pinch of salt and a little oil (optional)

Garnish

Fresh cilantro
Scallions or spring onions (green portion), sliced on the bias

1. In a large pot, boil enough water to cover the chicken.
2. Remove giblets inside the chicken, remove excess fat, and wash chicken thoroughly inside and outside.
3. When the water for the chicken comes to a boil, add ginger slices, spring onions, salt and sesame oil. Add chicken (breast down), cover pot, and boil for 10 minutes on medium heat. Leave pot covered tightly, switch heat off, and leave chicken to poach for 40 to 45 minutes.
4. Rinse rice in water and drain thoroughly. In a pot, heat oil, and sauté ground ginger & garlic on medium heat until fragrant. Add rice and stir to coat for 2 minutes. Add sesame oil and salt and sauté for another minute. Transfer rice to a rice cooker, add 2 cups of stock from liquid used to boil the chicken, and cook. Stir mixture gently periodically to prevent the rice from burning on the bottom. (If cooking in a regular pot, boil rice mixture with stock, stirring periodically. When almost all of the stock has evaporated, turn heat to very low, cover, and allow rice to steam till done.)
5. Place ice in a large bowl and add water to create an ice bath.
6. After chicken has been cooking for 40 to 45 minutes, remove chicken from the water and submerge chicken right away in the ice bath for 10 minutes. The ice bath stops the cooking process, makes the meat tender, and gives the skin a firm texture.
7. Remove chicken from ice bath, and rub or brush skin with sesame oil.



8. Cut up chicken. Cut off drumsticks at the joint and chop into pieces (if desired), or else leave whole. Remove the breast meat from the breast bone with the wing, one side at a time. Remove wings at the joint, and slice breast meat into even pieces.
9. To make the chili garlic sauce, blend ingredients in a food processor or blender until smooth and bright red.
10. When rice is ready, scoop into a small bowl and press into the bowl. Turn over bowl onto a plate to create a shaped mound of rice. Place sliced chicken on top of the mound of rice. Mix ingredients for flavoring sauce, place in a squeeze bottle (optional), and squirt sauce on chicken slices to flavor. Garnish chicken rice with cilantro and scallions. Arrange cucumber slices on plate, and serve with chili garlic sauce, dark soya sauce and ground ginger (optional).

Chili Shrimp (or Crab) - Serves 4

½ tbsp chili bean sauce
 2 tbsp tomato ketchup
 2 tbsp Maggi or sweet chili sauce
 1 tsp fish sauce
 1 tbsp sherry or cooking wine
 1 tsp lemon juice
 ½ tsp sugar
 ¾ cup water

½ tbsp cooking oil
 1 tsp or 2 cloves chopped garlic
 1 tsp ground ginger
 1 lb uncooked shrimp (or fresh crabs)
 Salt to taste
 1 tbsp chopped scallions
 1 egg, beaten

Chopped cilantro
 Chopped red chili with seeds removed (optional)

1. Mix together chili bean sauce, tomato ketchup, chili sauce, fish sauce, cooking wine, lemon juice, sugar and water.
2. Heat cooking oil in hot wok.
3. Stir-fry chopped garlic and ground ginger until fragrant.
4. Add shrimp and stir-fry till shrimp is almost cooked and turning orange. Add chopped scallions, and mix. Taste, and add additional salt if needed.
5. Add beaten egg and turn off heat when egg begins to set.
6. Transfer to serving dish and garnish with cilantro and chopped fresh red chili (optional).



Fried Hokkien Mee (or Fried Shrimp Noodles) – Serves 4

1 lb shrimp with shells
1 tsp cooking oil
½ tsp minced garlic
4 cups water
1 tsp light soya sauce
Dash of white pepper

1 lb pork bones and pork chops
1 tsp salt
4 cups water

½ lb squid rings, sliced
1 tsp light soya sauce
Dash of white pepper

2 tbsp cooking oil
2 eggs
4 cloves or 1 tbsp garlic, minced
8 oz thin rice noodles, soaked in hot water
16 oz thick yellow cooked noodles
½ lb bean sprouts
3 tbsp Thai fish sauce

¼ tsp or several dashes of white pepper
2 fried fish cakes, sliced
10 chives, cut 2 inches long
½ tbsp dark soya sauce
1 tsp salt or to taste

Chopped cilantro
Sliced fresh red chili (optional)

Sambal chili

½ lb dried chili, reconstituted in water
1 lb shallots
½ lb garlic
1 small ginger
1½ tbsp shrimp paste
¼ cup cooking oil
1 tbsp sugar
Salt to taste

2 calamansi lime (cut into half) or 1 regular lime (cut into wedges)

1. Peel shrimp, leaving tails on, and set shells aside. Heat 1 tsp of cooking oil in a pot and stir-fry ½ tsp of garlic in oil for 30 seconds. Add shrimp shells and stir-fry till shells turn orange and are cooked. Add water, bring to a boil, lower heat to medium, and simmer for 30 minutes.
2. Place the pork bones and pork chops in a stock pot. Cover pork with 4 cups of water, add 1 tsp salt, and bring to a boil. Lower heat to medium and simmer for 30 minutes, periodically skimming off the stock “scum.”
3. Season peeled shrimp with 1 tsp light soya sauce and a dash of white pepper, and set aside.
4. Similarly, season squid rings with 1 tsp light soya sauce and a dash of white pepper, and set aside.
5. To make sambal chili, blend chili, shallots, garlic, ginger, and shrimp paste in a food processor or blender. Heat ¼ cup oil in a hot pan, and fry the mixture over medium high heat till it is fragrant and turns dark red. Add sugar and if needed, salt to taste.
6. Heat 2 tbsp of oil in a wok or frying pan on medium heat. Add beaten eggs and scramble eggs till they are almost set. Make sure eggs don’t stick to the pan or burn.
7. Add more cooking oil if eggs are sticking to the pan. Add 1 tbsp minced garlic and fry for 30 seconds. Add softened thin rice noodles to the pan, and mix. Add 2 scoops each of shrimp stock and pork stock to noodles, increase heat to medium high, cover pan and bring to a boil.
8. Add thick yellow noodles and bean sprouts. Mix, cover pan, and simmer for another 2 minutes.
9. Remove cover, lower heat to medium, and add additional shrimp and pork stock to keep mixture from drying out.
10. Add fish sauce, white pepper, and seasoned shrimp. Mix well, but do not over mix.
11. When shrimp begins to turn orange, add seasoned squid rings. Again, add more shrimp and pork stock if needed.
12. Add sliced fish cake, chives and dark soya sauce, and mix well.
13. Taste gravy, add 1 tsp salt or more if needed.
14. Turn off heat, and transfer to serving dish immediately.
15. Top with chopped cilantro, and sliced fresh red chili (optional).



16. Serve with sambal chili and half a calamansi lime (or a wedge of lime).

Bubur Cha Cha (Sweet Potatoes & Taro in Coconut Milk) – Serves 6

2 medium or 1½ lbs sweet potatoes, cubed

1 small or 1½ lbs taro root, cubed

3 screwpine (i.e. pandan) leaves

5 cups water

1 cup sugar

¼ cup pearl sago

1 can (13.5 oz) unsweetened coconut milk

Pinch of salt

1. Place the cubed sweet potato and taro in a steamer, and steam for 10 minutes. Alternatively, you can spread the sweet potato and taro out in a round glass dish and steam it in a Chinese wok filled with some water. Set aside.
2. Knot the 3 pandan leaves together and place it in a pot with the 5 cups of water and bring to a boil. Add sugar, and stir to dissolve.
3. Add the pearl sago and boil for 10 minutes.
4. Lower the heat to medium, and add the coconut milk. Add a pinch of salt.
5. Add the steamed taro and sweet potato and mix.
6. Bring to a boil, and simmer for 5 minutes. Set aside. The pearl sago should be translucent. Remove the pandan leaves.
7. Serve hot, or else chill in the refrigerator for 5-6 hours. (Optional: Add shaved ice to a bowl of chilled bubur cha cha for an extra refreshing dessert.)



Variation (Rock Melon Sago Dessert):

Substitute the steamed sweet potato and taro with cubed fresh rock melon or cantaloupe, and serve chilled.