SUR LA TABLE

COOKING CLASSES

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Quick and Delicious Asian Noodles

WITH

CHEF ANNA RENDON

Sur la table

THE ART & SOUL OF COOKING

About Asian Noodles

Asian Wheat Noodles

Made with wheat flour, salt, water, and sometimes eggs and flavorings. Just like Italian pasta, always cook wheat noodles in plenty of boiling salted water. Some Asian cooks recommend cooking them until they are "al dente" (cooked through, but still firm), while others suggest cooking them a bit longer to make them softer. Rinse the noodles in cold water after cooking and let them drain. Toss them with a teaspoon or so of vegetable oil to prevent them from sticking, then fry them, or add them to a stir-fry or soup.

Supermarkets often carry several varieties of dried Asian noodles, which can be stored indefinitely. Asian markets often carry fresh noodles which can be kept for two or three days in your refrigerator. One pound of fresh noodles is equivalent to 1/2 pound of dried noodles.

Asian Rice Noodles

The principal ingredients of rice noodles are rice flour and water. However, sometimes other ingredients such as tapioca flour or cornstarch are also added in order to improve the transparency or increase the gelatinous and chewy texture of the noodles.

Rice noodles are most commonly used in the cuisines of East and Southeast Asia, and South India, and are available fresh, frozen, or dried in various shapes and thicknesses.

To use rice noodles, soak them in very hot water for 15 to 30 minutes. Toss and detangle the noodles with tongs while they are soaking to prevent them from sticking together.

After soaking, rinse the noodles well with cold water in a strainer or colander and cook in rapidly boiling water until just tender, about 1 to 5 minutes, depending on the size and shape of the noodle as well as what type of dish you are making. After cooking, rinse the noodles well in cold water and drain in a colander. It is helpful to toss the noodles with a teaspoon of vegetable oil to prevent them from sticking together once cooked. If you are using the noodles in a stir-fry dish containing a sauce mixture in which the noodles will further cook, they only need about 1 minute of cooking time and, if needed, the noodles can be used after being soaked. Some of the very thin rice noodles (angel hair and vermicelli size) are fine to use after soaking, or they may also be quickly boiled for a minute or two without soaking. Drain and rinse them in cold water.

If the noodles are being used in a soup, they are generally added just before serving or placed in the serving bowl and hot broth is poured over them. To use noodles this way, cook them beforehand, taking care not to overcook them. Test the noodles several times during cooking for doneness. One pound of fresh noodles is equivalent to 1/2 pound of dried noodles.

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Soba Noodles
These chewy Japanese buckwheat noodles are popular at soup counters in Tokyo. They are made with a blend of wheat and buckwheat flours and often sold fresh in Japan. They are widely available as dried noodles at Asian grocery and natural foods stores. Soba comes in different widths and flavors, including green cha soba, which is flavored with green tea, and yamaimo soba, flavored with yams. Follow package instructions for cooking. They usually require about 3 to 4 minutes of cooking time.

Chantaboon Rice Noodles
Translucent when dried, these flat noodles are used to make phad thai. They are often soaked in warm water before cooking. Available in many grocery stores and Asian markets.

Rice Paper Rounds
Also known as spring roll wrappers; made with rice and tapioca flour. They are translucent when dried and are soaked in water to make pliable for rolling. Available in some grocery stores and Asian markets.

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Perfect Shrimp Phad Thai

No need to call for take-out when this classic noodle dish is simple and easy to make. The sauce recipe makes more than you will need and can be frozen for your next dinner party or easy weeknight meal.

Yield: 4 servings

8 ounces Chantaboon rice noodles

Phad Thai Sauce:
2/3 cup tamarind concentrate
2/3 cup white vinegar
1/3 cup light soy sauce
1/3 cup fish sauce
1 teaspoon kosher salt
1 cup palm sugar (or brown sugar)
3 tablespoons garlic powder
1/4 cup Sriracha chili sauce

Phad Thai:
6 tablespoons canola or peanut oil
4 large eggs, beaten lightly
1 pound shrimp, peeled and deveined
3 garlic cloves, peeled and minced
2/3 to 1 cup phad thai sauce
2/3 cup diced, fried tofu
4 tablespoons thinly sliced sweet radish (optional)
6 tablespoons finely chopped chives or green onion
2 cups bean sprouts, rinsed well
1/2 cup ground, roasted peanuts

Garnish:
1/2 cup bean sprouts, washed, for garnish
Lime wedges, for garnish
2 tablespoons ground, roasted peanuts, for garnish

To soften Chantaboon rice noodles: Place in a large bowl and cover with warm water; soak for 30 minutes or until soft. Drain in a colander and set aside covered with a dish towel.

To make phad thai sauce: Place all ingredients in a medium saucepan. Bring to a boil over medium heat. Cook sauce until it thickens and coats the back of a spoon, about 15 minutes. Set aside.

Heat a wok over high heat, add the oil and swirl to coat the sides. Add the eggs and stir fry for 1 minute. Add the shrimp. When the shrimp are almost cooked through, stir in the garlic and noodles, followed by the phad thai sauce. Let the sauce boil and cook the noodles at the same time; mix well until the sauce is absorbed. Stir in the tofu and radish.

Check the noodles; if they are not tender, add another 1/4 cup sauce. When the noodles are tender, stir in chives or green onions, bean sprouts, and peanuts before removing the pan from the stove. Be careful not to overcook or the noodles will stick together. If this happens, pour in small amounts of water to separate them. When the water is absorbed, remove the pan immediately from the heat

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To serve: Place phad thai in a large serving bowl and garnish with fresh bean sprouts, lime wedges, and ground peanuts.

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Soba with Soy-Glazed Salmon and Snow Peas

This delicious and healthy stir-fry features soba noodles, which are made with buckwheat flour and originate from Japan. They have a chewy texture and nutty flavor. The soy-based glaze for the salmon does double duty as the sauce in this dish. You can cook the noodles 4 hours in advance and keep them covered in the refrigerator to make preparing this summer noodle dish a little faster as a weeknight meal.

Yield: 4 servings

1 tablespoon thinly sliced ginger
2 medium cloves garlic, peeled and minced
1 cup tamari soy sauce
2 cups sake
1-1/3 cups mirin (Japanese sweet rice wine)
1/4 cup firmly packed light brown sugar
1/4 cup honey
1 tablespoon rice vinegar
2 tablespoons vegetable or canola oil
4 (4 to 6 ounces) wild salmon fillets, about 1 inch thick, skin and pin-bones removed
Kosher salt and fresh ground pepper

1 tablespoon vegetable or canola oil
1 medium red bell pepper, core removed, cut into 1/8 inch wide by 3 inch long strips
8 ounces snow peas, washed and trimmed
8 ounces soba noodles, boiled until al dente and drained
6 green onions, washed, trimmed and thinly sliced

2 tablespoons toasted sesame seeds, for garnish

To prepare salmon: Preheat the oven to 375 degrees with an oven rack placed in the center.

Place the ginger, garlic, soy sauce, sake, mirin, brown sugar, honey, and rice vinegar in a medium saucepan and stir to combine. Heat over medium-high heat until mixture is reduced by half, about 12 to 15 minutes. Pour the glaze through a small mesh strainer into a small bowl and reserve.

Place a large oven-proof skillet on the stove over medium-high heat. Once the oil is shimmering, add the salmon fillets, skin side up, and cook until seared on the bottom, about 2 to 3 minutes. Using a fish spatula, carefully flip the salmon fillets over and remove from heat. Using a silicone pastry brush, generously coat the salmon with the glaze, reserving half of the glaze for later use. Place the salmon in the oven and cook fish starts to flake and is slightly pink in the center, about 5 to 7 minutes.

While the salmon is cooking, heat a wok or large nonstick skillet over high heat and add the oil. Once the oil is shimmering, add red bell pepper and cook for 2 minutes. Add snow peas and cook another 1 to 2 minutes. Add cooked soba noodles, tossing to coat, and simmer until noodles are warm and vegetables are crisp-tender, about 1 to 2 minutes. Add green onions and stir to combine.

To serve: Transfer noodle mixture to 4 individual serving plates. Top with a salmon fillet and garnish with sesame seeds. Serve immediately.

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Drunken Chicken Noodles

This Chinese influenced dish was made popular by the Chinese people living in Laos and Thailand. This dish does not contain alcohol and it is believed that the name comes from the creator needing to make the side dish to accompany drinking.

Yield: 4 servings

4 tablespoons vegetable or canola oil, divided
1 medium red bell pepper, core removed, cut into 1/8 inch wide by 3 inch long strips
2 medium garlic cloves, peeled and minced
1 pound ground chicken
1 tablespoon oyster sauce
1 tablespoon fish sauce
2 tablespoon chopped fresh Thai chiles
1 teaspoon soy sauce
1/2 teaspoon granulated sugar
1 pound flat rice noodles, cooked and cut in half crosswise
1/2 cup fresh Thai basil leaves
2 limes, cut into wedges for serving

Place a large wok or nonstick skillet on the stove over moderate-high heat and add 2 tablespoons of oil. When the oil is shimmering, add the pepper and cook until just tender, about 3 minutes. Add the garlic and cook until fragrant, about 1 minute. Add the chicken and cook, stirring often, until cooked through, about 4 minutes.

In a small bowl, use a whisk to combine the oyster sauce, fish sauce, chiles, soy sauce and sugar. Set aside.

Add the cooked noodles to the chicken mixture and cook until browned, about 4 minutes. Add the sauce and toss until well combined. Fold in the basil, taste and adjust seasoning with fish sauce.

To serve: Divide the noodles between 4 warmed serving bowls and serve immediately with lime wedges on the side.

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Szechuan Noodles with Ground Pork

This classic Szechuan recipe features chile paste, garlic, and ginger for a flavorful punch. After being softened in water, the bean thread noodles act as sponges to soak up all the flavors in this delicious and fun stir-fried dish. Make sure to buy thin noodles made of mung beans and not rice.

Yield: 4 servings

1/2 pound ground pork
2 tablespoons soy sauce
2 cloves garlic, peeled and minced
2 teaspoons sesame oil
2 teaspoons granulated sugar

4 ounces mung bean thread noodles, dried

2 tablespoons vegetable or canola oil
1 thai chile, trimmed, seeded, and finely chopped
1 tablespoon peeled and minced garlic
1 tablespoon peeled and minced ginger
4 teaspoons chile paste
3 tablespoons soy sauce
2 tablespoons rice vinegar
1/4 cup water
6 green onions, washed and thinly sliced, plus more for garnish
1 lime, cut into wedges, for garnish
1 to 2 teaspoons sesame oil, for garnish

To prepare pork: Place in a medium mixing bowl and add soy sauce, garlic, sesame oil, and sugar. Mix well to combine and let sit for 10 minutes.

To prepare noodles: Place in a large mixing bowl and cover with hot water. Let noodles soak until soft, about 5 to 10 minutes. Drain well in a colander and chop into 2-inch lengths. Set aside.

Heat a wok or large skillet over medium heat. Add oil, swirling to coat. Add chopped chile, garlic, and ginger and cook until fragrant, about 30 seconds. Add pork and stir-fry until cooked through, about 4 to 5 minutes. Add chile paste, soy sauce, and rice vinegar, stirring well. Add noodles and water, stirring well.
Cook until most of the liquid has been absorbed by the noodles. Add in the green onions and stir to combine. Remove wok from heat.

To serve: Divide the noodles between 4 shallow serving bowls. Top with remaining green onions and drops of sesame oil. Serve immediately.

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Quick and Delicious Asian Noodles: Equipment List

Below is a list of tools you'll need to make the recipes in this packet. Please ask your Chef Instructor or a Sales Associate for assistance with these items.

Cutlery
Chef's knife
Paring knife
Cutting board

Cookware
Saucepan (small and medium)
Colander
Wok
Skillet (medium, large)

Bakeware
Mixing bowls (small, medium, large)
Measuring cups (liquid and dry)
Measuring spoons

Gadgets / Hand Tools
Silicone spatula
Mesh strainer
Silicone pastry brush
Fish spatula
Whisk
Garlic peeler
Tongs
Garlic mincer
Microplane
Colander

Food
White vinegar
Kosher salt
Thai wok oil
Sriracha sauce
Fish sauce
Soy sauce

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