



# A taste of the *Orient*

Rich in fresh spices and veg,  
these delicious Chinese dishes  
mean you'll never reach for the  
takeaway menu again

Recipes JENNY CHANDLER

Photography and styling SIAN IRVING

## VEGETABLE CHOW MEIN

SERVES 4

### INGREDIENTS

- 250g medium, dried egg noodles

### SAUCE

- 1 tsp sesame oil
- 2 tbsp soy sauce
- 3 tbsp water
- 1 tbsp Shaoxing rice wine
- 1-2 tbsp chilli bean sauce (or chilli sauce and an extra dash of soy)

### VEGETABLES

- 3 tbsp vegetable oil
- 2 cloves garlic, finely chopped
- 1 small carrot, cut into matchsticks

- 6 fresh shiitake mushrooms (or chestnut mushrooms if not available), thinly sliced

- 100g tenderstem broccoli, sliced in half lengthways
- 60g cabbage (any green variety), sliced finely
- 100g bean sprouts, rinsed well
- 4 spring onions, sliced

**1** Cook the noodles according to the packet instructions. Drain and rinse them in cold water so that they don't become sticky.

**2** Mix together the sauce ingredients in a small bowl and set aside.

**3** Heat a wok and add the vegetable oil. Throw in the garlic, carrot, mushrooms and tenderstem broccoli and stir fry for 4 or 5 minutes.

**4** Add the cabbage, stir for a moment, and then pour in the sauce mixture.

**5** When the cabbage has softened, add the egg noodles, bean sprouts and spring onions. Toss around for just long enough to heat it all through and serve the chow mein at once.



## POTSTICKER DUMPLINGS

MAKES ABOUT 16

*These are a labour of love but worth it. You can freeze uncooked dumplings on a tray; cook from frozen but steam them for twice the time and cut one to check it is cooked*

### INGREDIENTS

#### DOUGH

- 150g plain flour
- 100ml boiling water

#### STUFFING

- 150g Chinese leaves/savoy cabbage, finely sliced
- ½ tsp salt
- 150g pork mince
- 2 tsp grated fresh ginger
- 1 clove of garlic, finely chopped
- 1 tbsp light soy sauce
- ½ tsp Shaoxing rice wine (or dry sherry)
- 1 tsp sesame oil
- 2 tbsp spring onions, finely chopped
- 1 tsp cornflour

#### DIPPING SAUCE

- 2 tbsp light soy sauce
- 1 tsp grated ginger
- 1 tsp sugar
- 1 tsp sesame oil
- 1-2 tsp rice vinegar (white wine vinegar at a push)
- 1-2 chillies, finely chopped

- 1 Sift the flour into a large bowl and gradually stir in the water with a fork until you have a firm, rather than a wet, dough (add a splash more water if the dough is dry).
- 2 Knead the dough on the work surface for about 5 minutes, until smooth, only adding flour if it is sticky. Cover with a damp towel and leave to rest (at least 20 minutes) while you prepare the stuffing.
- 3 Sprinkle the cabbage with the salt and set aside. Mix the remaining stuffing ingredients together in a bowl; then squeeze any excess moisture from the cabbage, before stirring it into the mix.
- 4 Put together the dipping sauce by mixing everything together and tasting until you're happy - balance the heat with sweet, salty and sour flavours.
- 5 Back to the dough: this makes 16 dumplings, so cut the ball of dough into quarters. Roll each quarter into a sausage shape and cut into 4 equal portions. Cover these with a damp towel while you flatten each shape with the palm of your hand, then roll them into 16 discs, about 8cm diameter. Lay the discs between a couple of sheets of

- greaseproof paper until you are ready to begin stuffing them.
- 6 Cradle each disc in one hand and spoon a heaped teaspoon of the filling into the centre. Fold it over in a half-moon shape and pleat one of the edges as you pinch the dough together, creating the classic crescent shape. Alternatively, think Cornish pasty and just pinch the two edges together, pleating as you go. Aim for a flat base and a rounded top. Place the dumplings on a floured tray, cover with a damp cloth, and refrigerate until ready to cook.
  - 7 Heat a little oil in a large frying pan over a medium heat. Place the dumplings flat-side down in the oil and fry for about 2 minutes until they begin to form a golden crust - lift one to check how they are doing. Add 100ml cold water to the pan and cover with a lid, or something heavy and flat, to trap the steam. Steam for about 8 minutes until the water has all but disappeared. Remove the lid and cook for another minute until you are able to lift the dumplings carefully from the pan with a spatula.
  - 8 Serve straightaway with dipping sauce.

## STIR-FRIED BEEF IN BLACK BEAN SAUCE SERVES 4

*This fabulous stir-fry tastes particularly good if you track down the salted black beans: they're fermented soy beans and are sold in Asian stores (or you can buy them online)*

### INGREDIENTS

- 400g sirloin or rump steak
- 1 tbsp cornflour
- 1 tsp sesame oil
- 1 tbsp soy sauce (preferably dark)
- 2 cloves garlic
- 1 thumb-sized piece of ginger
- 1-2 large red chillies
- 3 spring onions
- 1 red pepper, seeded and sliced
- a large handful of greens, such as pak choi, mangetout or sugar-snap peas, washed and trimmed
- 3 tbsp vegetable oil
- 1½ tbsp salted black beans (or 3 tbsp black bean sauce)
- 1 tbsp Shaoxing rice wine (dry sherry will do)

- a handful of fresh coriander leaves to garnish
- 1 lime, halved

- 1 Trim any fat from the steak and slice into finger-width strips (cut across the grain of the meat for the best texture).
- 2 Place the meat in a bowl and stir in the cornflour, sesame oil and soy sauce. Leave to marinate while you prepare the other ingredients.
- 3 Chop the garlic and ginger as finely as possible. Slice or finely chop the red chilli depending on the heat (test before using), and the spring onions.
- 4 Prepare the red pepper and green vegetables, remembering that everything should be bite-sized, particularly if you will be eating with chopsticks.
- 5 For the stir-fry, heat a wok, or large

- frying pan, to a high temperature and add half the vegetable oil. Add the beef and stir until the meat begins to brown and just firm up (don't overcook it). Tip the beef into a bowl and set aside.
- 6 Pour the remaining oil into the wok and add the garlic, ginger, chilli, spring onions, pepper and green vegetables, along with the black beans. Fry, stirring all the time, until the pepper begins to soften a little and the other vegetables become bright and vivid in colour.
- 7 Pour in the rice wine and add the beef. Give everything a stir before tasting. If you use the dark soy sauce you may require a pinch of salt but, if you use the light, saltier variety you might like to add a pinch of sugar.
- 8 Serve with steamed rice (50-75g per person) and garnish with coriander leaves and a wedge of lime.

