



bit spicy

Singapore hawker food, 1970s-style

Here we have a collection of stir fries, the sort of meal Singaporeans would eat on a daily basis. The food would be served in a bowl or plate, which would then be collected and washed up by the hawker. We have given you a basic recipe and technique, and below are other variations to try. They may look the same, but small differences in the ingredients can make a huge difference! The staples required are:

soy sauce, sweet chilli sauce, oyster sauce, fish sauce, teriyaki sauce, hoisin sauce, rice wine, dark brown sugar (palm sugar if available), tomato ketchup

Remember that the meat and vegetables need to be very thinly sliced to allow for speed of cooking. The whole process should only take a few minutes, so prepare the vegetables and sauce in advance. Pour the oil into the wok and make sure it is really hot before adding anything else, and you need to stir continually over a high heat throughout.

serves 4

Chicken stir fry

- 2 chicken breasts, thinly sliced
 - 2 tbsp vegetable or groundnut oil
 - thumb-sized piece of ginger with the skin left on, grated
 - 4 cloves garlic, crushed
 - 1 small onion or 4 shallots, chopped
 - 1 red pepper, thinly sliced
 - handful green beans
 - 1 medium carrot, thinly sliced
 - 4 stems long-stemmed broccoli, finely sliced
 - Handful of Thai basil (optional)
 - For the sauce: 1 tbsp fish sauce, 2tbsp each of sweet chilli, soy, rice wine, ketchup & hoisin sauce - mixed together in advance
1. Heat the oil in a wok, and add the garlic, ginger and shallots. Fry for a couple of minutes, then add the vegetables and stir fry briefly.
 2. Add the sauces, bring to the boil and then add the chicken, stirring continually. Add a little water if the sauce is too thick or it looks as though it will burn.
 3. When the chicken is cooked, stir through the basil, if using, and serve with your choice of rice or noodles. We suggest thin rice noodles in this instance.

Beef stir fry

- 500g thinly sliced good quality steak



- Shallots, garlic and ginger, as above
 - 2 tbsp oil
 - Finely chopped chillies, to taste
 - 1 tbsp corn flour
 - finely sliced pepper, mange tout and broccoli
 - for the sauce: 1tbsp each of fish sauce, oyster sauce, ketchup, rice wine and sugar; 2tbsp each of sweet chilli and soy sauce
1. Make up the sauce.
 2. Coat the beef in the cornflour. Heat the oil in a wok and add the beef. Fry briefly until just tender, then remove and keep warm.
 3. Add the sauces to the wok, bring to the boil and add the vegetables and chillies, cooking until the sauce has thickened slightly.
 4. Pour over the beef and serve with rice or noodles.

Pork stir fry

- 500g pork loin or fillet, thinly sliced
 - 2 tbsp oil
 - shallots, ginger & garlic as above
 - marinade: 1 tbsp sugar, 2 tbsp each of rice wine & teriyaki sauce,
 - sauce: 2 tbsp each of fish sauce, sweet chilli sauce, soy sauce, oyster sauce
 - 2 carrots and a handful of green beans, thinly sliced
 - Thai basil (optional)
1. Marinate the pork for at least a couple of hours, and mix the sauce prior to cooking.
 2. Heat the oil in a wok and fry the pork briefly.
 3. Add the sauce, bring to the boil and then add the vegetables. Add a little water if your sauce looks too thick.
 4. After a couple of minutes everything should be cooked, so stir in the basil and serve with rice or noodles.

Prawn stir fry

- 600g raw, shelled prawns
- 2 tbsp oil
- 5 cloves garlic, crushed
- thumb-sized piece of ginger, skin-on, grated
- finely chopped chillies, to taste



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- For the sauce: 1 tbsp each of sugar, & oyster and fish sauces; 2 tbsp each of soy sauce & ketchup; 3 tbsp sweet chilli sauce
1. Heat the oil in a wok and briefly fry the garlic, ginger and chillies.
 2. Add the sauce, bring to the boil and simmer for a few minutes until thickened.
 3. Add the prawns and cook until pink. Serve immediately with rice or noodles.