

Kung Pao Chicken

Authentic Kung Pao Chicken recipe with tender chicken, crunchy peanuts, and spicy Sichuan flavors. Ready in 40 minutes with restaurant-quality results.

20 min

PREP

20 min

COOK

40 min

TOTAL

4

SERVINGS

Easy

DIFFICULTY

Kung Pao Chicken

Ingredients

- 2 tbsp soy sauce
- 2 tbsp balsamic vinegar
- 2 tbsp powdered sugar
- 2 tbsp corn starch
- 8 chicken thigh
- 1 tsp onion powder
- 3 tbsp canola oil
- 5 chili flakes
- 1 slice fresh root ginger
- 3 clove garlic
- 6 scallion
- 6 bell pepper
- 1 cup peanut
- 1 pinch salt

Instructions

- 1 Prepare the sauce**

Whisk together 2 tablespoons soy sauce, 2 tablespoons Chinese black vinegar, 2 tablespoons sugar, 2 tablespoons cornstarch, and 1 cup water in a bowl until smooth with no lumps. Set aside.
- 2 Marinate the chicken**

Combine diced chicken with 1 teaspoon onion powder, 2 tablespoons cornstarch, and 1 pinch salt in a bowl. Toss until chicken is evenly coated and let stand for 5 minutes.
- 3 Prepare aromatics**

Mince 3 garlic cloves and slice 1 piece of ginger thinly. Remove seeds from 8 dried chilies and break them into small pieces.
- 4 Cook the chicken**

Heat 3 tablespoons oil in a wok or large skillet over high heat until shimmering. Add marinated chicken and stir-fry for 4-5 minutes until golden brown and cooked through.

- 5 Remove chicken with a slotted spoon and transfer to a plate. Leave oil in the pan.
- 6 **Toast spices**
Reduce heat to medium and add 8 dried chili pieces and 6 Sichuan peppercorns to the oil. Stir constantly for 30-60 seconds until fragrant but not burned.
- 7 **Cook aromatics**
Add minced garlic and sliced ginger to the pan. Stir-fry for 30 seconds until fragrant.
- 8 **Add vegetables**
Add 6 bell pepper pieces and 6 scallions to the pan. Stir-fry for 2-3 minutes until vegetables are crisp-tender.
- 9 **Combine and thicken**
Return cooked chicken to the pan and stir the prepared sauce to recombine. Pour sauce over chicken and vegetables, stirring constantly for 1-2 minutes until sauce thickens and coats everything evenly.
- 10 **Serve**
Transfer to serving plates and garnish with chopped roasted peanuts. Serve immediately over steamed rice.

Tips

Toast the Sichuan peppercorns and dried chilies in a dry pan for 30-60 seconds before adding other ingredients to enhance their aromatic properties and prevent burning.

Cut the chicken into uniform 1/2-inch pieces to ensure even cooking. Slightly frozen chicken is easier to dice cleanly and uniformly.

Prepare all ingredients before starting to cook, as stir-frying happens very quickly. Have your sauce mixed and vegetables chopped and ready to go.

Use high heat throughout the cooking process to achieve the characteristic 'wok hei' or breath of the wok that gives restaurant-style stir-fries their distinctive flavor.

Don't overcrowd the pan when cooking the chicken. Cook in batches if necessary to maintain high heat and achieve proper browning.

Add the peanuts at the very end to prevent them from becoming soggy. For extra crunch, toast them separately in a dry pan before adding.

Adjust the spice level by controlling the number of dried chilies and the amount of Sichuan peppercorns used. Remove seeds from chilies for less heat.

For the most authentic flavor, seek out Shaoxing wine to add 1 tablespoon to the sauce mixture - it adds depth and complexity to the overall dish.