



Perfect Dry Mee

NIBBLEDISH CONTRIBUTOR

Ingredients

- dried noodles for 1, ideally the flat kind
- 1 boneless, skinless chicken breast
- 1 cup beansprouts
- 1.5L chicken stock (cube will do)
- half a cup of spring onions for garnish, chopped
- 1 tablespoon Singapore-style chilli sauce
- 2 tablespoons kecap manis
- 2 tablespoons sesame oil
- 1 dash chinese black vinegar
- 1 dash light soy sauce
- white pepper

Instructions

It is something of a perennial quest of mine to create the perfect "dry" Chinese noodle dish, at home. This is where the noodles are cooked, drained and then tossed in a thick sauce. The overall dish should try to balance the 5 chinese tastes - Spicy, Sweet, Sour, Bitter and Salty - so I usually serve it with some boiled greens for the bitter element.

I did a dish like this a while back on this site - this is a slightly updated version since I've learned a couple of new tricks. The main improvement is bringing the chicken breast into the cooking process. I've never understood until now how noodle stalls in South East Asia manage to get their boiled chicken so soft and tender, since whenever I try cooking it at home to add as a side to a dish like this, it becomes dry and hard. The secret? You don't boil it, you *poach* it! Also, the steak-cooking rule applies here too -

after cooking the chicken let it rest for a while before cutting otherwise all the moisture inside will evaporate and you'll end up with dry chicken again.

Makes 1 bowl.

1. Heat the chicken stock in a wok to a very slight boil. You want to barely see bubbles. Add the chicken breast, cover and poach for 10 ~ 15 mins depending on size. You can use a meat thermometer to determine when the chicken is fully cooked - the inside should be 165F.
2. Remove the chicken breast and set aside. Skim off any foam from the stock and bring back to a rolling boil.
3. Add your noodles and cook for 2 ~ 5 mins until the noodles are soft but still have a little bite to them. At the last moment, put your beansprouts in and almost as soon as you do this, turn off the heat. Beansprouts hardly need any time to cook and you want them to still have texture.
4. Drain the noodles and beansprouts and add them back to the now dry pan. Add the chilli, kecap manis, sesame oil, black vinegar, soy sauce, spring onions and mix everything well. Dust with white pepper - this adds a bit of heat but also gives it an amazing aroma.
5. Flake the chicken breast with a fork. You probably won't need to use it all and can save some for another time.
6. Serve the noodles in a large bowl and put your chicken on top. Et voila. Street food at home.