



Southern Cross
University

Fusion festival 2025

Celebrating Southern Cross University's diverse communities through food

2025 COOKBOOK



Contents

iv	Introduction
1	Breakfast Smoothie
2	Karen’s Yummy Granola
4	Croatian Chicken Paprikaš
6	Shiratama Mochi
8	Steamed Barramundi
10	Momo
11	Vegan Eggplant Melts
12	Poor Students’ Peanut Butter Pasta
14	Ugali & Sukuma Wiki
16	Chinese Sweet and Sour Pork with Pineapple
18	Fårikål (Norwegian Lamb & Cabbage Stew)
20	White Radish Braised Beef
22	Tteokguk (Korean Rice Cake Soup)
24	Colombian Arepas
26	Feijoada
28	Pão de Queijo (Brazilian Cheese Bread)
30	Korean Braised Short Ribs Recipe
32	Easy Yorkshire Stockpot
34	Ukadiche Modak (Steamed Modak)
36	Nasi Goreng (Indonesian Fried Rice)
38	Chilean Hot Dog (Completo Chileno)
40	Sakkarai Pongal: Tamil Hindus Traditional Festival Dish
42	Coconut Chicken Soup Hotpot
44	Hong Kong-Style Char Siu (Barbeque Pork)
46	Za’atar
47	Braised Pork Belly with Preserved Vegetables (Mei Cai Kou Rou)
50	Kung Pao Chicken
52	Family Anzac biscuits



Introduction

Written by Rob Cumings

In 2020 I led the delivery of the University's annual Fusion Festival, which included developing the very first Fusion Festival Cookbook. The Cookbook was an idea of its time, and happily that idea continues to entice, excite, engage, educate and tantalise us and our tastebuds! So, I was delighted to be invited back to provide this introduction to the 2025 edition.

What I learnt when we created the first cookbook was that food is a keystone to our lives, our families and our cultures. Cuisine is informed by cultural mores and religious beliefs, the seasons, availability of ingredients, personal ethics and collective memory.

I still recall the mouth-watering aroma of my grandmother's home-baked pies, cooling on the windowsill and the sense of comfort, care and love conveyed by those pies.

The 2025 Fusion Festival Cookbook is rich with ideas, recipes, insights and delights. It is visually stunning. Congratulations to all the contributors and the team who have produced it.

Brekkie Smoothie

Shared by Aylott

Method

1. Use a blender to mash up the banana, strawberries, mango chunks, blueberries, and raspberries.
2. Add the Greek yoghurt, honey, along with the LSA powder, chai seeds and turmeric.
3. Pour in almond milk until it half covers the fruit, then pour in the coconut water to cover the rest.
4. Last, add the crushed Weetbix.

Enjoy while still cold.



Photo: cup of couple via pexels

Ingredients

- 1 banana
- A handful of strawberries
- A handful of mango chunks
- A handful of blueberries
- A handful of raspberries
- 1-2 tablespoons of Greek yoghurt
- 1 tablespoon of honey
- 1 tablespoon of LSA powder (can be bought from Aldi!)
- 1 pinch of chai seeds
- 1 pinch of turmeric
- Almond milk
- Coconut water
- 1 crushed Weetbix

Karen's Yummy Granola

Shared by Michaela Flood

Method

1. Preheat oven to 170°C. Line a large tray with baking paper.
2. Combine all dry ingredients in a bowl.
3. Heat oil and maple syrup in a small pot, then pour over the dry ingredients.
4. Incorporate well and form balls of mixture, compacting firmly. (Kaz doesn't do this.)
5. Spread over the baking paper.
6. Bake in the oven for 20 minutes, turning regularly to ensure even browning.



Photo: Polina Tankilevitch via pexels

Ingredients

- 1 & ½ cups of rolled oats
- 2 tablespoons of brown sugar
- 1 tablespoon of plain wholemeal flour
- 2 tablespoons of desiccated coconut
- 1 & ½ teaspoons of cinnamon (Kaz uses lots more!)
- ¼ cup of dried figs
- ¼ cup of dried apricots, chopped
- ¼ cup of dried raisins, chopped
- ½ cup of pecans or almonds (as Kaz uses), whole roasted
- 60 millilitres of vegetable oil
- 2 tablespoons of maple syrup
- Optional: 3 tablespoons of puffed rice



Photo submitted

Chicken Paprikash is a warm and comforting Croatian goulash with sweet capsicum tones. It's an easy, low-and-slow dish you can pair with your favourite pasta or mash. This is a traditional family favourite I learned from my Baka, who came from a remote farming village called Mala Erpenja in Zagorje, Croatia.

Croatian Chicken Paprikaš

Shared by Emelia Naumov

Preparation time: 1.5 hours | Serves 4

Method

1. In a large pot, pour 3 tablespoons of canola oil on high heat and sizzle the finely diced onion until golden.
2. Add 5 dashes of paprika and mix through until the onion turns dark orange.
3. Add the chicken to the pot and add 2 teaspoons of salt to taste.
4. Place the lid on the pot and simmer on medium-low heat.
5. Cut the capsicum into short strips and dice the tomatoes. Add them into the pot as well as 3 dashes of paprika and mix through.
6. When the chicken is 1/3 cooked, place the lid back on the pot and stir occasionally.
7. Start cooking the pasta in 2 litres of boiling water in a large saucepan. When the water reduces, add a small amount of oil to prevent sticking together.
8. Strain the pasta once it is cooked.
9. When the chicken thighs are cooked, use a wooden spoon to break them into smaller chunks.
10. Pour enough boiling water to just cover the chicken; this will form the sauce.
11. To thicken the sauce, stir in 2 tablespoons of sour cream and 2 tablespoons of corn flour into the pot.
12. If the sauce is still watery, stir in extra corn flour as required.
13. Add 5 dashes of paprika to taste and simmer the pot on low heat.

Serve pasta or mashed potato into a bowl, then pour the saucy Chicken Paprikaš on top. Garnish with fresh herbs like basil or coriander

Idemo jesti! (pronounced “yes-tea”). Let’s eat!

Ingredients

1 red capsicum, cut into short strips
2 tomatoes, diced
1 brown onion, finely diced
6 chicken thigh fillets
Canola oil
Ground sweet paprika
Sour cream
Corn flour
Salt
Optional: 400g Mafalda corte pasta, macaroni pasta or mashed potato



Photo submitted

Shiratama Dango are soft, mochi-like dumplings that add a refined sweetness and chewy, bouncy texture to “Wagashi” (Japanese traditional sweets) and modern desserts. When the craving strikes, it’s easy to make them!

Shiratama Mochi

Shared by Illy

Serves 2-3

Method

1. Put the glutinous rice flour in a bowl and mix while adding water, little by little.
2. Mix until the dough texture is soft, smooth, and slightly springy when pressed (like an earlobe!). Then, round it into bite-sized pieces, making a shallow impression in the centre of each mochi ball with your thumb.
3. Add dumplings to boiling water in a pot, and boil for about 1 minute until the white balls of dumplings float. Then, drain the water.
4. Put the dumplings in cold water to remove the raw heat. Place in a serving bowl and sprinkle it with roasted soybean powder and brown sugar syrup

Serve with matcha ice cream.

Ingredients

100g glutinous rice flour
80ml water
1 tablespoon of roasted soybean flour
1 tablespoon of brown sugar syrup
Matcha ice cream
Hot water (to boil)
Cold water (to cool down)



Photos:q submitted

Steamed barramundi, or Qīngzhēng Lúyú (清蒸鲈鱼), is a classic Chinese dish often served during family gatherings and celebrations, especially during Chinese New Year. In Chinese culture, fish is symbolic of abundance and prosperity, as the word for fish (鱼, yú) sounds like “surplus” (余, yú). My family always prepares this dish for special occasions, believing it brings good fortune and harmony to the household.

Qīngzhēng Lúyú - 清蒸鲈鱼 Steamed Barramundi

Shared by Michaela Flood

Method

1. Rinse the fish and pat it dry. Score the fish with diagonal cuts on both sides.
2. Rub the fish with Shaoxing wine and place some ginger slices inside the cavity.
3. Steam the fish over high heat for 8-10 minutes, depending on its size. The flesh should be tender and flaky.
4. In a small pan, heat the oil until hot.
5. Transfer the steamed fish onto a plate, discard excess water, and sprinkle with spring onions and coriander.
6. Pour soy sauce and sugar over the fish, then drizzle the hot oil to release the aroma.

Serve immediately with steamed rice.

Ingredients

- 1 whole barramundi (or sea bass), cleaned and scaled
- 2-inch piece of ginger, julienned
- 3 stalks of spring onions, julienned
- 2 tablespoons of light soy sauce
- 1 tablespoon of Shaoxing wine (Chinese cooking wine)
- 1 teaspoon of sugar
- 2 tablespoons of hot oil (Vegetable or Sesame oil)
- Fresh coriander for garnish



Photo by Valeria Boltneva via pexels

Momo is a popular and well-loved local dish in Nepal, believed to have been introduced by Tibetan people. It holds a special place in the hearts of Nepalese, as it is a common choice whenever they visit a restaurant. While it resembles Chinese dumplings, its flavour is quite distinct. Known as either Momo or Momos, this dish has won over the taste buds of my friends from various cultures, who have also added it to their list of favourite foods. Momo represents more than just a meal, it embodies the emotions, social connections and culture of the Nepalese people. There is not a single Nepalese who is not familiar with Momo.

Momo

Shared by Laxmi
Serves 4-5

Method

1. Mix the flour and 1 & ½ cups of room temperature water in a bowl. Knead the dough until it is medium firm and flexible. Cover and let rest for one hour.
2. Meanwhile, mix the mince chicken/vegetarian filling, chopped cabbage, coriander, onions, garlic, ginger, cumin, 2 tablespoons of salt and ½ teaspoon of pepper in a bowl.
3. Pour melted butter and mix everything well. Let it marinate for 15-20 minutes for better flavour.
4. To make the wrapper: Break off ½ an ounce of dough and form it into a ball. Place the ball on a flat surface and roll it into a round shape approximately 4 inches in diameter with a rolling pin. Repeat with the remaining dough.
5. Spray a steamer pan with cooking spray.
6. Place a tablespoon of your meat choice or vegetable filling in the middle of a wrapper. Holding the wrapper in one hand, use the thumb and index finger of your opposite hand to start pinching the edges of the wrapper together. Pinch and fold until the edges of the circle close like a little satchel. Place the Momo in the prepared steamer pan. Repeat with the remaining wrappers and filling.
7. Fill the steamer pot halfway with water and bring to a boil. Set the steamer pan with Momos on top of the pot and cover with a tight lid. Steam the Momos until cooked, for around 8 to 9 minutes.

Serve with a spicy Nepalese pickle or chutney.

“Momo from scratch is the best. You won’t regret it.”

Ingredients

- 4 cups of all-purpose flour
- 1 packet of chicken mince or could be goat/beef as per taste (if vegetarian, then skip this step)
- 1 cup of chopped coriander
- 1 cup of chopped onions
- 1 cup of chopped cabbage
- 4 tablespoons of minced garlic
- 4 tablespoons of minced peeled ginger
- 2 tablespoons of ground cumin
- 1 teaspoon of garam masala powder
- 1 teaspoon of curry powder
- 2 tablespoons of melted butter
- Salt
- Black pepper
- Option: if vegetarian or vegan, then minced soya chunks and chopped cabbage can be used

Vegan Eggplant Melts

Shared by Jason Schatz

Method

- 1. Preheat oven to 170 degrees.
- 2. Chop eggplants in half long-ways.
- 3. Brush with olive oil.
- 4. Bake for 15 minutes, while you chop vegetables.
- 5. Remove baked eggplant halves.
- 6. Fill with the mixed vegetables.
- 7. Smother in vegan mozzarella.
- 8. Bake 30 mins.

Ingredients

- 1 red capsicum
- 1 purple onion
- 1 potato
- 2 eggplants
- Olive oil
- 1 cup vegan Mozzarella

Delicious!



Photo by Rachel Claire via pexels

Poor Students’ Peanut Butter Pasta

Method

- 1. Boil water in saucepan.
- 2. Add salt and pasta.
- 3. Stir occasionally while boiling for 12 minutes.
- 4. Drain pasta.
- 5. Add peanut butter.
- 6. Microwave for 30 seconds.
- 7. Stir well.
- 8. Add salt and pepper to taste.

Ingredients

- 1 pack of pasta spirals
- 4 tablespoons of crunchy peanut butter
- Pinch of salt

Serve immediately

I improvised when I was a poor student who needed nourishment and energy, but couldn’t afford more than \$5!



Photo submitted

Ugali and Sukuma Wiki are staples in Kenyan homes, offering a hearty and flavourful meal. Ugali, a simple cornmeal porridge, provides a satisfying base, while Sukuma Wiki, a leafy green dish, delivers essential nutrients and a vibrant taste. This combination is a true representation of everyday Kenyan cuisine, often enjoyed alongside a rich beef stew.

Sukuma Wiki, which translates to “push the week” in Swahili, is a dish that’s often eaten throughout the week due to its affordability and nutritional value. Ugali, on the other hand, is a staple that provides the necessary carbohydrates for a day’s work.

Kenyan Comfort: Ugali & Sukuma Wiki

Shared by Tiziana Wangui

Preparation time: 1 hour | Serves 4

Method

Ugali:

1. Boil Water in a large, heavy-bottomed pot. Bring the water to a rolling boil.
2. Gradually add the cornmeal, stirring continuously with a wooden spoon to prevent lumps.
3. Reduce the heat to low, and continue to stir vigorously for about 15-20 minutes, or until the Ugali becomes very thick and pulls away from the sides of the pot.
4. Remove from heat. You can shape the Ugali by scooping portions onto plates and forming them into mounds.

Sukuma Wiki:

1. In a large skillet or pot, heat the vegetable oil over medium heat. Add the chopped onions and cook until softened, about 5 minutes. Add the minced garlic and cook for another minute until fragrant.
2. Add the chopped tomatoes and cook until they break down and form a sauce, about 5 minutes.
3. Add the finely chopped Sukuma Wiki, salt, and optional chilli flakes. Stir well to combine.
4. Add the water or vegetable broth, cover the skillet, and simmer for 10-15 minutes, or until the Sukuma Wiki is tender. Stir occasionally.

Serve the Sukuma Wiki hot alongside the Ugali while both are hot.

Traditionally, Ugali is eaten with your hands. Take a small portion of Ugali, form it into a small ball, and use it to scoop up the Sukuma Wiki.

This meal is often served with a flavourful beef stew on the side, adding another layer of richness.

Enjoy!

Ingredients

For Ugali:

- 2 cups white cornmeal (finely ground)
- 4 cups water

For Sukuma Wiki:

- 1 bunch Sukuma Wiki (collard greens or kale can be substituted), washed and finely chopped
- 1 large onion, chopped
- 2 tomatoes, chopped
- 2 cloves garlic, minced
- 1 tablespoon of vegetable oil
- 1/2 teaspoon of salt (or to taste)
- 1/4 cup of water (or vegetable broth)
- Optional: 1/4 teaspoon chili flakes for a little heat
- parmesan for serving



Photo submitted

Sweet and Sour Pork with Pineapple is more than just a delicious dish to me—it carries cultural significance, family traditions, and connections between people.

Sweet and Sour Pork is a very popular dish in Chinese cuisine, especially in Cantonese cooking. It combines the refreshing tang of vinegar, the sweetness of pineapple, and the crispy texture of fried pork, perfectly embodying the balance of flavours that Chinese cuisine values. This dish has also gained popularity in Chinese restaurants worldwide, evolving through cultural fusion to become a classic dish that connects the East and the West.

For many families, Sweet and Sour Pork is a comforting dish often served at gatherings, festive celebrations, or special occasions. Its vibrant colours and rich flavours make it a favourite among both adults and children. For me, this dish holds an even more special place in my heart because it was the first dish I cooked for my Australian boyfriend's family, and they loved it! To me, this dish is not just food—it's a way to express my care and share my culture with them.

On a broader level, Sweet and Sour Pork represents cultural fusion. Originally, this dish spread worldwide with Chinese immigrants and was adapted with local ingredients, such as pineapple. It is not only a delicious meal but also a symbol of cross-cultural exchange. In my case, it became a bridge between me and my boyfriend's family, allowing them to experience my culture and culinary skills through taste.

Chinese Sweet & Sour Pork with Pineapple

Shared by Nannan Di

Method

Marinate the Pork:

In a bowl, mix the pork with salt, white pepper, soy sauce, and egg. Let it marinate for at least 15 minutes.

Coat and Fry the Pork:

In another bowl, mix corn starch and flour.

Coat the marinated pork evenly with the flour mixture.

Heat oil in a deep pan to 170°C (340°F).

Fry the pork in batches until golden brown and crispy. Remove and drain on paper towels.

For extra crispiness, fry the pork a second time for 1-2 minutes.

Prepare the Sauce:

In a small bowl, mix ketchup, vinegar, sugar, and soy sauce. Set aside.

Heat 1 tablespoon of oil in a pan over medium heat. Stir-fry onions, bell peppers, and pineapple for 1-2 minutes.

Pour in the sauce mixture and bring to a boil.

Combine Everything:

Add the corn starch slurry to the sauce to thicken it. Stir well.

Toss in the fried pork and mix until evenly coated.

Transfer to a plate and serve immediately with steamed rice.

Ingredients

For the pork

500g (1 lb) of pork loin or pork shoulder, cut into bite-sized cubes

1/2 teaspoon of salt

1/4 teaspoon of white pepper

1 tablespoon of soy sauce

1 egg

1/2 cup of corn starch

1/4 cup of all-purpose flour

Oil for deep frying

For the sauce

2 tablespoons of ketchup

2 tablespoons of white vinegar

2 tablespoons of sugar

1 tablespoon of soy sauce

1 teaspoon of corn starch mixed with 2 tablespoons water (slurry)

Other ingredients

1/2 cup of fresh pineapple chunks (or canned, drained)

1/2 green bell pepper, cut into chunks

1/2 red bell pepper, cut into chunks

1/2 onion, cut into chunks

Fårikål

Norwegian Lamb & Cabbage Stew

Shared by Amos



Photo: Jarvin, CC BY 3.0 via Wikimedia Commons

Fårikål is a cosy dish. It's made from bone-in mutton simmered for hours with cabbage, whole black pepper, and sometimes a touch of wheat flour, creating a rich and hearty broth. Served the traditional way, steaming hot alongside rustic, skin-on boiled potatoes, for the ultimate cozy comfort meal.

Method

1. In a large bowl, mix together the lamb meat and flour. The flour will help thicken the stew just a bit as it cooks.
2. Pour the water into a large casserole pot. Place a layer of the floured lamb on the bottom, followed by a layer of cabbage. Add some peppercorns and salt. Repeat this process until you have used all the ingredients, finishing with a final layer of cabbage on top. The volume should be about 1 part meat to 4 parts cabbage.
3. Cover with a lid and bring to a boil. Turn the heat to low and slowly cook until the meat is tender and pulls apart from the bone easily, around 2 hours. The cabbage contains a lot of water that will be emitted during the cooking time, so don't feel compelled to add more water than the stated amount.

Ingredients

2 kilos of lamb meat, cut into large pieces (neck, shoulder, shank)
60 grams (½ cup) of flour (omit for a gluten-free option)
100 mls of water
2 kilos of white cabbage, cut into large wedges
5 teaspoons of whole black peppercorns
3 teaspoons of salt

Serve warm with freshly boiled potatoes and a knob of butter.



Photo by Tracey Omae via ohmyfoodrecipes.com

White Radish Braised Beef, is a classic home-style Sichuan dish that holds special meaning for me and my family.

White Radish Braised Beef is more than just a dish; it represents family traditions and the essence of Sichuan cooking. This was the first dish my father taught me because it embodies the core techniques of Sichuan-style braising. Another similar dish, Braised Beef with Potatoes, follows the same method and is also a staple in Sichuan households. Every winter, we make this dish not only to keep warm but also to gather around the table and enjoy each other's company.

White Radish Braised Beef

Shared by Xinyu Yang

Method

1. Cut the beef into chunks and blanch in boiling water to remove impurities.
2. Heat a bit of oil in a pot, sauté the ginger, star anise, cinnamon, and bay leaves until fragrant. Add a spoonful of Pixian Doubanjiang and stir-fry until the oil turns red.
3. Add the beef and stir-fry until evenly coated, then season with light soy sauce, dark soy sauce, and rock sugar.
4. Pour in enough water to cover the beef, bring to a boil, then lower the heat and simmer for about an hour.
5. Peel and cut the white radish into chunks, add to the pot, and continue simmering for another 30 minutes until the beef is tender and the radish absorbs the flavour.
6. Add salt to taste, let it simmer for a few more minutes, and it's ready to serve.

Ingredients

500 grams of beef brisket
1 white radish (about 500g)
5 slices of ginger
1 tablespoon of cooking wine
2 tablespoons of light soy sauce
1 tablespoon of dark soy sauce
Some rock sugar
2 star anise
1 small piece of cinnamon stick
2 bay leaves
1 tablespoon of Pixian Doubanjiang (fermented chili bean paste)
Salt to taste
Water as needed

Tteokguk

Korean Rice Cake Soup

Shared by Gyuwon Lee



Photo submitted

Tteokguk is a traditional Korean dish that is commonly enjoyed during Seollal (Lunar New Year). In Korean culture, eating this soup symbolises gaining wisdom and good fortune for the year ahead. I grew up eating this dish with my grandmother every New Year, and even now, cooking it brings back fond memories of family warmth and togetherness.

This dish is simple yet comforting, making it a perfect meal for cold days. I hope you enjoy making it and that it brings you as much warmth and happiness as I do!

Method

1. Soak the rice cakes in water to soften them before cooking.
2. Stir-fry the thinly sliced beef with sesame oil, salt, and black pepper until cooked.
3. Add beef bone broth and water, bringing it to a boil.
4. Once boiling, add the soaked rice cakes and dumplings.
5. When the rice cakes become soft, season the soup with Dashida (Beef seasoning powder) or coin broth to taste.
6. Add the chopped spring onions and simmer for 3 more minutes.
7. Prepare the eggs:
 - Option 1: Beat the eggs and drizzle them into the soup while stirring.
 - Option 2: Cook the egg yolk and white separately into thin sheets, slice them into strips, and use them as garnish.

Garnish with seaweed flakes and sesame seeds, then serve hot!

Ingredients

- 2 eggs
- 2-3 handfuls of sliced rice cakes (Tteokguk tteok)
- Dried seaweed flakes (for garnish)
- Salt and black pepper (to taste)
- 500 millilitres of beef bone broth
- 50 millilitres of water
- A handful of lean beef (thinly sliced)
- Spring onions (chopped)
- Sesame oil
- Beef seasoning powder (Dashida) or coin broth (for additional flavor)
- Optional:
 - Sesame seeds (optional)
 - Dumplings (I recommend putting dumplings in Tteokguk)



Photos submitted

I want to share about arepas because it is our most traditional food. This means a lot in my culture, as our indigenous people cooked arepas due to the main crop product being corn. I grew up eating arepas with coffee before going to school, or for dinner with eggs, and sometimes for lunch with beans. This is a traditional dish of Colombian cuisine, and its preparation, filling and cooking style can vary depending on the region in Colombia.

We love to eat arepas anytime - not only for breakfast, but also for lunch, dinner, as a snack, or at events.

Colombian Arepas

Shared by Kelly Johanna Lizarazo Pimiento

Method

1. In a bowl, put the warm water with the butter, salt and the precooked corn flour. Be careful with the water – it should not be hot, only warm. Mix and add the grated cheese. Keep mixing with your hands until you get a homogeneous consistency. If you need, add more flour or water.
2. Divide into portions, make balls with your hands, and on another clean surface (table, plate), crush them into a round shape, not making them too flat.
3. Put the arepas in a hot frying pan with a little oil or butter and let them heat until they get brown, then turn them over to the other side. When the arepas are fried, add the filling of your choice.

Ingredients

2250 grams of precooked cornmeal

150 grams of grated cheese, you can add more if you want (recommendation: feta cheese)

500 millilitres of warm water (depends on how much cheese you add)

Butter

Salt

Optional fillings: egg, avocado, kidney beans, mushroom, cream cheese



Photo submitted

Feijoada, the quintessential Brazilian dish, is a hearty stew of black beans and a mix of meats, which in Brazil, is not just a meal but a cultural phenomenon. This dish is a symbol of Brazilian identity, embodying the diversity and richness of the nation's history.

Origins and History

The roots of Feijoada stretch back to the 16th century, during the period of Portuguese colonisation. The common narrative that Feijoada was created by slaves who prepared stews from leftover meats from their masters' households is a part of Brazilian folklore. However, this story oversimplifies the dish's complex history. Food historians argue that Feijoada is more accurately an adaptation of European stews, like the Portuguese "cozido" — a dish made with beans, vegetables, and meats. The African slaves and Brazilian natives contributed to the evolution of Feijoada, incorporating local ingredients and techniques, and transforming it into a unique Brazilian dish.

Cultural Significance

Feijoada is traditionally served on Saturdays, intended to be a leisurely meal that lasts throughout the afternoon, often extending into the evening. It's a time for Brazilians to gather with family and friends, to relax, and to enjoy each other's company. The dish is usually accompanied by a spread that includes white rice, orange slices, collard greens, farofa (toasted cassava flour), and a spicy pepper sauce known as Molho de Pimenta.

Feijoada

Shared by Priscila De Lima

Method

Beans Preparation:

Soak the beans in cold water overnight to soften. Drain and rinse.

In a large pot, cover the beans with fresh water. Bring to a boil, then reduce heat and simmer until tender, about 1-2 hours.

Meats Preparation:

Desalt the carne seca by soaking it in water overnight, changing the water a few times.

Boil the carne seca, pork ribs, and sausages in separate pots for about 30 minutes to remove excess salt and impurities. Drain and set aside.

Feijoada Assembly:

In a large pot, cook the bacon until it begins to crisp. Add the chopped onion and garlic, cooking until they are soft and fragrant.

Add the precooked meats to the pot, allowing them to brown slightly with the bacon, onion, and garlic mixture.

Pour in the tender black beans along with the bay leaves. Add enough water to cover all the ingredients by a couple of inches. Season with salt and pepper.

Let the Feijoada simmer over low heat for at least 2 hours. The longer it cooks, the more the flavours will meld together. Add more water as needed to maintain a stew-like consistency.

Serving:

Adjust the seasoning of the Feijoada to your taste. It should be rich, smoky, and slightly salty.

Serve the Feijoada hot in a large bowl or deep plate. Garnish with chopped parsley and green onion.

Arrange the orange slices around the Feijoada and serve with bowls of white rice, sautéed collard greens, farofa, and molho de pimenta on the side.

Ingredients

500 grams of dry black beans

200 grams of carne seca (Brazilian dried beef), desalted and diced

200 grams of pork ribs

200 grams of smoked sausage, such as linguiça or chorizo, sliced

200 grams of fresh sausage, such as Brazilian-style sausage, sliced

150 grams of bacon, diced

1 large onion, finely chopped

4 cloves of garlic, minced

2 bay leaves

Salt and freshly ground black pepper, to taste

2 oranges, sliced for garnish

Fresh parsley and green onion, finely chopped for garnish

Accompaniments

White rice, cooked until fluffy

Collard greens, finely sliced and sautéed with garlic

Farofa, made by toasting cassava flour with butter, diced onions, and bacon

Molho de pimenta, a sauce made with malagueta peppers or other hot peppers, vinegar, and spices



Photo submitted

Pão de Queijo, the Brazilian cheese bread, is a culinary treasure that has transcended its local roots to become a beloved snack worldwide. Its unique texture and rich flavour profile make it an irresistible treat. To truly appreciate Pão de Queijo, one must delve into its storied past and learn the art of its creation.

The Origins of Pão de Queijo

The story of Pão de Queijo begins in the rolling hills of Minas Gerais, Brazil, during the 18th century. This region, known for its dairy prowess and abundant cassava, birthed a recipe that would become a national icon. The original version of this bread did not contain cheese; it was a product of the indigenous people’s ingenuity, who used cassava as a dietary staple. The introduction of cheese came with the Portuguese colonisation, which brought cattle and dairy farming techniques to the region. As cheese became more accessible, it found its way into the local cuisine. The fusion of cassava flour and cheese gave birth to the Pão de Queijo we know today. This cheese bread quickly became a symbol of Brazilian hospitality, often served to guests as a warm gesture of welcome. It’s a tradition that continues to this day, with Pão de Queijo frequently gracing the tables of Brazilian homes and restaurants alike.

Pão de Queijo Brazilian Cheese Bread

Shared by Priscila De Lima

Method

1. Begin by preheating your oven to 375°F (190°C). Line or lightly grease a baking sheet.
2. In a medium saucepan, combine the milk, butter, and salt. Place over medium heat and stir occasionally. Watch for the moment when the butter has fully melted and the mixture reaches a gentle boil. Promptly remove from heat to prevent the milk from scalding.
3. Add the tapioca flour to the hot milk mixture. Stir with determination until you have a smooth, sticky dough. This step is crucial as it precooks the flour, which is essential for the texture of the bread
4. Transfer the dough to a large mixing bowl. It’s important to let the dough rest for a few minutes to cool slightly, so the eggs won’t cook upon contact with the hot dough.
5. Once the dough is warm (not hot), beat in the eggs one at a time, ensuring each is fully incorporated before adding the next. The dough should become glossy and stretchy. Now, gently fold in the grated Parmesan and shredded mozzarella until the mixture is just combined.
6. With the dough ready, use an ice cream scoop or two spoons to form round balls of dough. Space them out on the prepared baking sheet, as they will puff up during baking.
7. Bake for 20-25 minutes, or until puffed and slightly golden. They should be crispy on the outside and soft on the inside. Allow to cool for a few minutes on a wire rack before serving.

They are best enjoyed warm, when the cheese is still oozy and the aroma is most enticing.

Pro Tips:

Cheese Choices: For a more authentic flavour, seek out Brazilian cheeses. If unavailable, a blend of Parmesan and mozzarella offers a good balance of sharpness and meltability.

Kneading: Don’t shy away from a thorough kneading process. It helps develop the right texture, ensuring the bread is chewy and airy.

Sticky Dough: If the dough is too sticky to handle, chilling it for 10-15 minutes in the refrigerator can make the scooping process easier.

Flavour Variations: Consider adding a pinch of garlic powder, chopped fresh herbs, or even a bit of cayenne pepper for a spicy kick.

Ingredients

- 2 cups of tapioca flour (also known as cassava or manioc starch)
- 1 cup of whole milk (substitute with 2% if preferred)
- ½ cup of unsalted butter
- 1 teaspoon of salt, adjusted to taste
- 1 and a ½ cups of finely grated Parmesan cheese
- 1 cup of shredded mozzarella cheese (for authenticity, try to find a Brazilian cheese like Queijo Minas)
- 2 large eggs, at room temperature



Photo: Arnold Gatilao CC 2.0 via Wikimedia Commons

Braised Short Ribs recipe is my favourite Korean dish. The beef can be substituted with any meat based on personal preference or religious dietary restrictions.

Korean Braised Short Ribs

Shared by Naye Kang

Method

1. Remove Blood from Ribs: Soak the ribs in cold water for about 1 hour to remove excess blood. (Change the water a few times for better results.)
2. Boil the Ribs: In a pot, add the ribs, 1L of water, onion, green onion, garlic, and ginger. Boil over medium heat for 10–15 minutes. Remove the ribs and rinse them under running water.
3. Make the Sauce: In a bowl, mix soy sauce, sugar, minced garlic, sesame oil, black pepper, and pear juice.
4. Cook the Ribs: Put the boiled ribs and the sauce into a pot and simmer over low heat for 40–50 minutes. Stir occasionally to ensure the ribs absorb the sauce evenly.
5. Once the sauce thickens and the ribs become tender, turn off the heat and serve!

Enjoy!

Tip: Add carrots, potatoes, or mushrooms for extra flavour.
The leftover sauce is great for mixing with rice!

Ingredients

1 kilo of beef short ribs
1 litre of water (for boiling the ribs)
1 onion (cut in half)
1 green onion (cut into 4 pieces)
5–6 garlic cloves
1 small piece of ginger (optional)

For Sauce

6 tablespoons of soy sauce
2 tablespoons of sugar (or 3 tablespoons of corn syrup)
1 tablespoon of minced garlic
1 tablespoon of sesame oil
A pinch of black pepper
Optional: ½ cup of pear juice or apple juice



Photo: Rachel Phillips via rachelphipps.com

As a proud Australian-born Englishman, I love this recipe from home. It's often called a Lancashire hotpot, but coming from Yorkshire I simply cannot let that stand! (The House of York and the House of Lancaster were on opposing sides during the so-called Wars of the Roses from 1455 to 1487).

And so, in the spirit of Plantagenet rivalries, I present the Yorkshire Hotpot...

Easy Yorkshire Stockpot

Shared by Chris Ashton

Method

1. Dice the lamb into 2 centimetre squares, slice the potatoes (c. 3 mm) and the onions, and take the tops of the baby carrots.
2. With the oil, fry off the diced lamb in a hot pan.
3. Remove the lamb, then soften the onions and mushrooms in the same pan and add the lamb back in.
4. Throw in the baby carrots, the stock and the bay leaves, give it a good sprinkle of salt and pepper, and a respectable splash of the Worcestershire and the HP.
5. Cover and place in the oven for 30 minutes.
6. Transfer the contents of the pan to a casserole dish, and then cover completely with sliced potatoes, overlapping each other (which will make the top parts of the potatoes nice and crispy and the bits underneath soft).
7. Brush on a little melted butter and sprinkle on the thyme.
8. Cover and bake in a slow oven around 170°C for 2 hours, removing the lid for the last 30 minutes to brown the potatoes.

Serve generously, sit back and think of England.

Ingredients

1.2 kilos of best end neck of lamb
 1 kilo of potatoes
 300 grams of baby carrots
 300 grams of button mushrooms
 600 grams of onions
 2 bay leaves
 35 grams of butter
 1 litre of stock
 Salt and pepper
 Worcestershire sauce
 HP sauce
 2 tablespoons of thyme
 2 tablespoons of olive oil



Photo: Dharmadhyakshas, CC, via Wikimedia Commons

Being from the coastal region near Mumbai (India), I've grown up surrounded by the rich traditions of Ganesh Chaturthi, a festival that brings entire communities together. Our land is blessed with abundant coconut trees and rice paddies, making coconut and rice staples in many dishes, including the sweet filling of Ukadiche Modak.

Although I am Catholic, I have always been drawn to the warmth and devotion surrounding Ganesh Chaturthi. Every year, my Hindu friends lovingly prepare Modaks, and I eagerly visit their homes to share in the joy. The aroma of steaming Modaks, the prayers, the laughter, and the sense of togetherness make this festival incredibly special to me. For me, Ukadiche Modak isn't just a sweet; it's a symbol of unity and love in diversity. It represents how food and traditions bring people from different backgrounds closer, strengthening friendships and celebrating the beauty of India's cultural harmony.

Ukadiche Modak

Steamed Modak

Shared by Pretty Londhe

Preparation time: 1 hour | Makes 10-12 modaks

Method

Prepare the Filling (Saran)

Heat ghee in a pan and add poppy seeds. Add grated coconut and sauté for 2 minutes on a low flame. Add grated jaggery and mix well. Cook until the jaggery melts and combines with the coconut. Add cardamom powder and chopped nuts (if using). Turn off the heat and let the filling cool.

Make the Dough

Boil water in a pan, add salt and ghee. Lower the flame and add rice flour gradually while stirring continuously. Mix well, cover, and let it steam for 2-3 minutes. Transfer the dough to a plate and knead while warm until smooth. Use a little water or ghee if it feels dry.

Shape the Modaks

Grease your hands with ghee and take a small portion of the dough. Roll it into a ball and flatten it into a cup shape. Place a spoonful of coconut-jaggery filling in the centre. Start pleating the edges and gather them together at the top, sealing it to form a Modak shape.

Steaming the Modaks

Grease a steamer plate or banana leaves with ghee. Place the Modaks inside and steam for 10–12 minutes on medium heat. Once done, they will turn slightly translucent.

Serve warm with ghee on top for the best taste!

Ingredients

For the Dough (Outer Covering)

- 1 cup of rice flour
- 1 cup of water
- 1 teaspoon of ghee (clarified butter)
- ¼ teaspoon of salt

For the Filling

- 1 cup of grated coconut
- ¾ cup of grated jaggery
- ½ teaspoon of cardamom powder (elaichi)
- 1 teaspoon of ghee

Optional:

- 1 teaspoon of poppy seeds (khus khus)
- 1 teaspoon of chopped nuts (cashews, almonds)



Photo by Markus Winkler via pexels

Nasi Goreng is more than just a popular dish in Indonesia; it is a comfort food and a symbol of togetherness. For many Indonesian families, it's a quick, easy, and delicious meal that can be prepared with whatever ingredients are on hand, making it both versatile and practical. In Indonesian culture, food is deeply tied to social gatherings. Nasi Goreng is often served for breakfast, lunch, or dinner, and it's commonly enjoyed during special occasions like family reunions, festivals, or even at street food stalls where vendors offer their own unique spins on the dish.

Nasi Goreng Indonesian Fried Rice

Shared by Peter Lemuel

Method

1. Prepare the Rice: Make sure the rice is cold, as day-old rice works best for fried rice. It helps the grains stay separated and avoid clumping together.
2. Cook the Chicken: Heat a tablespoon of oil in a pan or wok over medium heat. Add the diced chicken (or your choice of protein) and cook until browned and cooked through. Set it aside.
3. Sauté the Aromatics: In the same pan, add another tablespoon of oil. Sauté the minced garlic, chopped shallots, and red chillies until fragrant and golden brown, about 2-3 minutes.
4. Add the Rice: Add the cold rice to the pan. Stir well to combine with the aromatics and coat the rice with the oil and spices.
5. Add the Sauces: Pour in the sweet soy sauce (Kecap Manis) and soy sauce. Stir the rice to evenly coat it with the sauces, which will give it a rich, savoury flavour.
6. Egg and Veggies: Push the rice to one side of the pan and scramble the egg on the other side. Once the egg is cooked, mix it into the rice. Add the cooked vegetables and cooked chicken back into the pan.
7. Season: Taste the rice and season with salt, pepper, or more soy sauce if needed. Stir everything together.
8. Serve: Garnish the Nasi Goreng with sliced cucumber and tomatoes, and top with fried shallots for some crunch. Serve with a side of sambal for added spice.

Ingredients

2 cups of cooked rice (preferably a day old)

2 tablespoons of vegetable oil

2 cloves garlic, minced

2 shallots, finely chopped

1-2 red chillies (adjust to taste), chopped

1 chicken breast, diced (optional, can also use shrimp or tofu)

1 egg (scrambled)

½ cup of cooked vegetables (carrots, peas, etc.)

2 tablespoons of sweet soy sauce (Kecap Manis)

1 tablespoon of soy sauce

Salt and pepper to taste

Sliced cucumber and tomatoes for garnish

Optional:

Fried shallots for garnish

Sambal (chilli paste) for serving



Young Sok Yun, CC, via Flickr

In Chile, the Completo is more than just a hot dog, it's a social experience! Whether enjoyed at a casual family gathering, a night out with friends, or a quick street food stop, Completos bring people together. Unlike traditional American hot dogs, Chilean hot dogs are generously topped with fresh ingredients, making them a unique and flavourful experience. The most famous version, the Completo Italiano, gets its name from the colours of the Italian flag: green (avocado), white (mayonnaise), and red (tomato).

Chilean Hot Dog Completo Chileno

Shared by Isidora Campagne

Makes 4 Hot Dogs

Method

1. Prepare the avocado by mashing it in a bowl. Add a pinch of salt and a squeeze of lemon juice to prevent browning. Mix well until smooth and creamy.
2. Dice the tomatoes into small cubes. If desired, add a pinch of salt for extra flavour.
3. Bring a pot of water to a boil and cook the sausages for about 5 minutes, or grill them for extra flavour.
4. Assemble the Completo.
5. Warm the hot dog buns slightly to make them soft.
6. Place the cooked sausage inside the bun.
7. Add a generous layer of mashed avocado on one side.
8. Top with diced tomatoes.
9. Finish with a thick line of mayonnaise on top (using a piping bag or a spoon for a clean look).

Variations

Completo Clásico: Instead of avocado, add sauerkraut and mustard.

Completo Dinámico: Add chopped onions and a bit of spicy sauce.

Completo Italiano Especial: Add a sprinkle of merken (Chilean smoked chili) for an extra kick.

Enjoy! Eat immediately and savour the delicious combination of flavours.

Ingredients

4 hot dog buns (soft and slightly larger than standard hot dog buns)

4 sausages (beef, pork, or chicken, preferably boiled or grilled)

1 large ripe avocado

2 medium tomatoes, finely diced

½ cup of mayonnaise (preferably homemade or a rich, creamy one)

Salt to taste

A squeeze of lemon juice

Optional: Sauerkraut and mustard (for the Completo Clásico version)



Photo: Babithajcosta via Wikimedia Commons

Sakkarai Pongal is more than just a sweet dish in Tamil Hindu culture - it's a celebration of harvest, gratitude, and community. In my family, the preparation of this dish during the Thai Pongal festival is a cherished ritual that connects us to our ancestors and agricultural roots.

The very act of cooking Pongal is symbolic - we use a new clay pot adorned with turmeric plants and kolam (rice flour designs) and watch with joy as the rice-milk mixture "Pongal" or boils over, signifying abundance and prosperity for the coming year. This overflowing represents the overflow of nature's bounty and our gratitude to the sun god, Surya (in Tamil), for blessing our crops.

My earliest memories include waking before dawn on Thai Pongal day, hearing the sounds of my grandmother preparing the hearth, washing the rice, and invoking blessings. The house would fill with the sweet aroma of jaggery melting and cardamom infusing the air. When ready, the Pongal would be offered first to the sun with prayers before being shared among family members and neighbours.

In our community, Pongal symbolises unity and harmony. During the festival, differences are set aside as families prepare this dish and share it with neighbours, regardless of social status. The simple ingredients - rice and dal (representing the staple crop), jaggery (sweetness of life), ghee (prosperity), and spices (diversity) - come together to create something greater than their parts, much like our diverse community.

Today, even as many Tamil Hindu families have migrated across the world, Sakkarai Pongal remains a powerful cultural anchor, connecting us to our heritage. When I prepare this dish using my grandmother's recipe, I'm not just cooking food; I'm participating in a tradition thousands of years old that celebrates nature's cycles, expresses gratitude for life's blessings, and strengthens the bonds that hold our community together.

Sakkarai Pongal

சக்கரை பொங்கல்

Tamil Hindus Traditional Festival Dish

Shared by Banujan Kuhaneswaran

Method

1. Dry roast the moong dal until lightly golden and aromatic.
2. Wash the rice and roasted moong dal together.
3. In a heavy-bottomed pot or traditional clay pot, add the rice and dal mixture with water and cook until soft.
4. In a separate pan, melt the jaggery with 1/4 cup water and strain to remove impurities.
5. Add the jaggery syrup and milk to the cooked rice-dal mixture.
6. Mix well and cook on low heat, stirring continuously to prevent sticking.
7. In another small pan, heat ghee and fry cashews and raisins until golden.
8. Add this to the Pongal along with cardamom powder and edible camphor (if using).
9. The Sakkarai Pongal should have a thick, porridge-like consistency when done.

Serve hot, garnished with additional ghee.

Ingredients

- 1 cup of raw rice
- ¼ cup of moong dal aka mung bean (பச்சைப்பயறு aka பாசிப்பருப்பு)
- 2 cups of water (for cooking rice and dal)
- 2 cups of milk
- 1 to 1½ cups of jaggery (வெல்லம்)
- ¼ cup of ghee
- 10-15 cashew nuts
- 2 tablespoons of raisins
- ½ teaspoon of cardamom powder (ஏலக்காய்)
- Optional:
- A pinch of edible camphor (பச்சைக் கற்பூரம்) (traditional)
- ¼ teaspoon of saffron strands



Photo: Kathy Yuan via themalamarket.com

This Coconut Chicken Soup Hotpot holds a special place in Southern China, as part of the Hainanese cuisine (an island province of China). It brings families and friends together, where we share food and conversations, while adding fresh ingredients at the end allows everyone to choose what they like. The blend of coconut's natural sweetness with tender chicken reflects the heart of Chinese dining: harmony, balance and union.

Coconut Chicken Soup Hotpot

Shared by Yumeng Qian

Method

1. Cut the chicken legs (with skin on) into small or big pieces depending on your preference. Place them in a pot of cold water and bring them to a boil. Let it cook for 3-4 minutes to blanch.
2. Take the chicken out of the pot and set aside.
3. Pour the coconut water into the pot (I prefer to use Cocobella coconut water because it is sweet).
4. Add corn and coconut meat (frozen or scoop the meat inside a drinking coconut) and simmer for 5 minutes.
5. Add the chicken pieces to the pot. You can also add some goji berries or jujube fruits depending on personal preference.
6. Let it simmer in medium heat for 20-25 minutes.

Enjoy your coconut chicken soup!

Note: Once you've nearly finished the chicken, feel free to add any vegetables or slices of meat you like and turn the soup into hotpot. Enjoy it with your own favourite sauce!

If the hotpot soup isn't enough, add some extra coconut water as needed.

Ingredients

Coconut water: 1000 millilitres or 1500 millilitres

6 pieces of chicken drumsticks with skin on

1 corn cob

Optional:

Frozen coconut chunks or fresh coconut meat from drinking coconut

10-20 Goji berries

5-10 Jujube fruits

Any vegetables

Thin slices of any meat

My favourite dipping sauce ingredients

1-2 spoons of soy sauce

2-3 cloves of crushed garlic

Half of a lime, juiced

1-2 teaspoons of coriander

1-2 teaspoons of sesame oil

1 chopped bird's eye chilli



Photo: Smuconlaw via Wikimedia Commons

Char Siu is a classic to-go food in Hong Kong. It's one of the signature items of a generic group of food called Siu Mei, comprised of a variety of meat roasted in rotisserie ovens. Char Siu's sweet and charred taste is great company with rice and egg, making it a simple but delicious meal for everyone.

Hong Kong-Style Char Siu (Barbeque Pork)

Shared by Sheena Chung

Method

1. Marinate cutlets with all ingredients (except honey) overnight.
2. Preheat oven to 200 °C. Place marinated cutlets and sauce on a flat pan and foil for 20 minutes (depending on how thick your cuts are).
3. Lower the temperature to 100 °C and remove the foil for 20 minutes. In the meantime, glaze the cutlets with sauce in the pan on both sides every 10 minutes.
4. Glaze the cutlets with honey on both sides and continue to cook them for 5 minutes.
5. Take the cutlets from the oven and let them sit for 10 minutes.

Ingredients

700 grams of pork shoulder/
collar thick cutlets

4 tablespoons of store-
bought Char Siu sauce

1 tablespoon of Chinese
cooking wine

2 teaspoons of ginger juice

1 tablespoon of light soy
sauce

1 tablespoon of honey

Cut them to biteable sizes and enjoy!



Photo: eat kubba via Pexels

I would like to share my Za'atar recipe, which is an essential part of the Mediterranean or Middle Eastern cuisine. Even though I don't have any Middle Eastern background, Za'atar has become a very important ingredient in my breakfast. Olive oil and Za'atar are the soul mates of Turkish Bread/ Pide. Za'atar is a super-easy ingredient that enhances the taste of your breakfast.

Za'atar

Shared by Tony Chen

Method

1. Set oven to 180 degrees Celsius. Toast the coriander seeds for 5 minutes or until fragrant, then ground them.
2. Additionally, lightly toast the dried thyme leaves in the oven, then ground.
3. Mix all ingredients together and keep in an airtight jar, then ALL DONE!

Ingredients

- 1 kilogram of coriander seeds
- 1 kilogram of sumac
- 1 kilogram of toasted white sesame seeds
- 1 kilogram of dried thyme leaves
- 250 grams of Kosher salt

Braised Pork Belly with Preserved Vegetables (Mei Cai Kou Rou)

Shared by Yingjie Cai

Method

Preparing the Pork Belly

1. Place the whole pork belly in a pot of cold water, add 2 slices of ginger and 1 tablespoon of cooking wine.
2. Bring to a boil, skim off any impurities, and simmer for about 10 minutes until the surface of the pork firms up.
3. Remove the pork, rinse under cold water to clean off any residue, and drain well.
4. Prick the skin evenly with a fork or toothpick to help it absorb flavours.
5. Brush a layer of dark soy sauce on the pork skin for colour and let it sit for 10 minutes.
6. Heat a little oil in a pan over low heat. Place the pork belly skin-side down and fry until the skin turns golden brown and slightly crispy (about 2-3 minutes).
7. Flip and fry the other sides until slightly browned. Remove from the pan and let it cool.
8. Slice the pork belly into pieces about 0.5 cm thick, set aside.

Preparing the Preserved Mustard Greens

1. Soak the dried preserved mustard greens in water for 30 minutes, changing the water 2-3 times to remove excess salt and impurities.
2. Drain and squeeze out the excess water, then chop into small pieces.
3. Heat a bit of oil in a pan, add minced garlic, 1 slice of ginger, star anise, and the cinnamon stick. Stir-fry until fragrant.
4. Add the chopped preserved mustard greens, 1 tablespoon light soy sauce, a pinch of white pepper, and a small amount of sugar. Stir-fry for a few minutes until aromatic. Set aside.

Assembling and Steaming

1. Arrange the sliced pork belly in a bowl with the skin side facing down.
2. Evenly spread the stir-fried preserved mustard greens on top of the pork.
3. Drizzle in light soy sauce, oyster sauce, a bit of salt, and sugar. Add enough water to just cover the preserved mustard greens.

Braised Pork Belly with Preserved Vegetables is a beloved dish in China, particularly in Hunan and Jiangsu. It's known for its tender, caramelised pork in a rich, glossy sauce. My family enjoys this dish on special festivals, such as Chinese New Year. The red colour symbolises prosperity and happiness, making it a festive favourite.

Method cont'd

Steaming the Dish

1. Place the bowl in a steamer over boiling water. Cover and steam for 1.5 to 2 hours, until the pork becomes tender and infused with flavour.
2. Carefully remove the bowl, pour out any excess liquid into a separate bowl (to be used for sauce).
3. Cover the bowl with a large serving plate and carefully flip to invert the dish so that the pork belly slices are on top.

Making the Sauce (Optional)

1. Pour the reserved steaming liquid into a pan and bring to a simmer.
2. Add a cornstarch slurry (mix 1 teaspoon of cornstarch with 2 tablespoons of water) to thicken the sauce slightly.
3. Drizzle the sauce over the pork and garnish with chopped scallions.

Tips for Best Results

- Fry the pork belly on low heat to prevent oil splatter.
- Rinse the preserved mustard greens thoroughly to reduce excessive saltiness.
- Dark soy sauce is mainly for colour, so don't use too much to avoid an overly dark appearance.
- The longer the steaming time, the softer and more flavourful the pork becomes.

Ingredients

500 grams of pork belly
80 grams of dried preserved mustard greens (Mei Cai)
5 slices of ginger
3 cloves of garlic, minced
1 tablespoon of cooking wine
2 tablespoons of light soy sauce
1 tablespoon of dark soy sauce
1 tablespoon of oyster sauce
10 grams of rock sugar (or white sugar)
Salt, for taste
A pinch of white pepper powder
1 piece of star anise
1 small piece of cinnamon stick
Cooking oil as needed
Optional: Scallions, for garnish



Photo: Jen Lueng via Flickr

Kung Pao Chicken

Shared by Zixin Li

Method

Method for chicken

1. Remove the bones from the chicken thighs and drain them on kitchen paper.
2. Cut them into large pieces.
3. Put half a teaspoon of salt into the chicken and scrunch it up with the chicken for a minute (until it sticks).
4. For 480 grams of chicken, add the salt, corn starch and water. Scrunch it until there is no powder and water remaining.
5. Drizzle cooking oil over the surface of the chicken.
6. Cut the garlic and ginger into slices, and put them into the chicken.
7. Cut the shallots into big slices, and add some dry chilli.

Method for sauce

1. Mix all ingredients evenly.
2. Put oil in the pan and wait until it's hot. Pour in the Sichuan pepper sauce and fry for 15 seconds, then filter it out.
3. Then put hot chillies in and use low heat.
4. Turn the heat to high and put in all the chicken. Stir quickly for 1 minute.
5. Pour out the chicken, then put one tablespoon of bean paste into the pan. Stir-fry it until the oil turns red.
6. Pour the chicken back in, add the sauce, shallots, chilli, and peanuts. Stir it quickly.

Ingredients

For Chicken

- 480 grams of chicken thighs
- 5 pieces of garlic
- 5 grams of ginger
- Dry chilli (as desired)
- Shallots (as desired)
- Peanuts (as desired)
- 2 grams of salt
- 2 grams of corn starch
- 50 grams of water

For Kung Pao Sauce

- 30 grams of sugar
- 35 grams of vinegar
- 10 grams of soy sauce
- 3 grams of dark soy sauce
- 2 grams of sate sauce
- 1 gram of white pepper powder
- 6 grams of corn starch
- 20 grams of water



Photo: Rprua via Flickr

Family Anzac Biscuits

Shared by Gabrielle Caulfield

Method

1. Preheat oven to 170C. Place the flour, oats, sugar and coconut in a large bowl and stir to combine.
2. In a small saucepan, place the golden syrup and butter and stir over low heat until the butter has fully melted. Mix the bicarbonate soda with the water and add to the golden syrup mixture. It will bubble whilst you are stirring together, so remove from the heat.
3. Pour the mixture over the dry ingredients and mix together until fully combined.
4. Roll tablespoonfuls of mixture into balls and place on baking trays lined with non-stick baking paper, pressing down on the tops to flatten slightly.
5. Bake for 12 minutes or until golden brown.

Ingredients

- 1 and ¼ cups of plain flour, sifted
- 1 cup of rolled oats
- ½ cup of caster sugar
- ¾ cup of desiccated coconut
- 150 grams of unsalted butter
- 2 tablespoons of golden syrup or treacle
- 1 and ½ tablespoons of water
- ½ a teaspoon of bicarbonate soda