

Chinese Style Dumplings!

Filling Ingredients:

- 1.5 lbs of ground pork*
- 0.5 lbs of shrimp (8-10 jumbo shrimp, minced ok)*
- ½ napa cabbage, chopped fine
- 7-8 scallions (1 bunch), sliced into thin rounds
- 3 tablespoons of soy sauce
- 2 tablespoons of sesame oil
- 1 teaspoon of ground white pepper



*For a vegetarian option, substitute tofu for the pork and shrimp after following these directions:

Mince 2 pounds of firm tofu. Let it drain for 5 minutes. Then stir-fry with 4 tablespoons of oil, 4 tablespoons of soy sauce, and 4 tablespoons of minced garlic. Fry until gently browned and fragrant. Another good addition is to mix in some scrambled eggs.

Wrappers

You can choose either store bought wrappers or you can make your own wrappers. For this recipe, and less-experienced dumpling makers, I would recommend store-bought dumpling wrappers. You can usually find these at your local Asian grocery, usually in the refrigerated/frozen section. Or you can use wonton wrappers from your local American supermarket. If the wrappers are frozen, let them sit out at room temperature to thaw until pliable.

- 2, sixteen-ounce packages of dumpling wrappers

Optional: Dumpling Wrapper Recipe

Dumpling wrappers can be a little time-consuming to make, and store-bought dumplings wrappers are quite good these days. Dumpling wrappers are a little tricky to get right, but you want about a 3:1 ratio of flour to liquid ingredients. Some recipes call for just flour and water. Others use part water, part oil. Regardless, you'll want to be conservative while adding your liquids. Keep in mind, you can always add more water, but you can't take it away while making dough.

- 4 cups of all-purpose flour
- 1 cup of water
- 1 egg

Mix all ingredients together and firmly knead the resulting dough. (If your dough feels like it's not coming together, let it sit for 20-30 minutes, covered at room temperature to hydrate) You're looking for a relatively firm texture with a smooth finish (think a little tougher than the heel of your palm). Cut your dough into small spheres and roll out into circles about 3 inches wide and about 1 millimeter thick.

Directions

1. Mince your filling ingredients and mix.

The only special step you need to take is salting the napa cabbage before mixing it with your proteins. Mince your cabbage, move it to a large bowl and then add about 3 teaspoons of salt. Mix and let sit for 5 minutes. Then, squeeze large handfuls of the cabbage to release the juices (drain those juices off). It's important to try and wring as much water as you can out of the cabbage before making your filling, or else the texture can become watery.

After salting and draining your cabbage, combine it with your proteins and seasonings to create your dumpling filling.

Optional: After mixing, if your filling seems like it's not coming together as a smooth paste, add one fresh egg and continue mixing. The egg will help bind the ingredients. This step might be needed depending on how lean your protein is or the general quality of your cabbage

Recommended: Before folding, put a tablespoon of filling onto a plate and cook it in the microwave (10-15 seconds). Taste for seasoning and adjust before folding.

2. Fold your dumplings.

First, dip your finger in some warm drinking water, and then swipe your finger around the edge of the wrapper. You're looking to make a light film of water around the edge about 1 cm wide. (You can omit this step if you're using homemade wrappers). This will help the wrapper seal during the folding. Place about a tablespoon of filling into the center of your wrapper, and then fold the wrapper in half like a semicircle so that the edges meet. And then pinch the edges shut so that the filling is sealed inside. You'll want this seal to be relatively airtight.

3. Cook your dumplings.

You can boil these for about 5-6 minutes, or until they float to the top of the water. Or you can pan fry them by heating up 2 tablespoons of oil in a large pan on medium high heat and frying the bottoms for about 2 minutes, or until lightly browned. Then pour in about half a cup of water (per dozen dumplings) and cover for 2-3 minutes, or until the water has evaporated.

4. Enjoy!

Key Tips:

Season to taste! Everyone's dumpling filling will turn out a little different. Sometimes your scalions will be a little smaller or more potent. Maybe your soy sauce uses less salt than other brands. Try using this recipe as a baseline, but always feel free to adjust based on how you want things to go!

Feel free to substitute ingredients! If you're not a fan of pork, use ground chicken! If you don't like shrimp, you can leave it out! Dumpling filling really can be whatever you want!