



Vegetable Dumplings

Maggie Zhu's recipe makes fun appetizers that everyone loves

- 1/4 cup dried shiitake mushrooms (7 to 8 small mushrooms)
 - 2 cups hot water or as much as needed
 - 2 tablespoons dried wood ear mushrooms (or 1/2 cup minced bamboo shoots)
 - 1-1/2 ounces dried rice vermicelli noodles
 - 5 Tablespoons peanut oil, divided
 - 4 cloves garlic, minced
 - 1 Tablespoon minced ginger
 - 1 cup finely chopped carrots, (about 4 medium carrots.)
 - 2 cups shredded cabbage
 - 3 Tablespoons soy sauce, divided
 - 1 Tablespoon Shaoxing wine (or dry sherry)
 - 1 teaspoon curry powder
 - 1/2 block (8 oz.) firm tofu, crumbled by hand
 - 1 teaspoon maple syrup
 - 1/2 cup finely chopped scallions
 - 50 packaged frozen dumpling wrappers, thawed
- Serve with:** Dipping Sauce (see attached recipe)

Sliced or chopped scallions as desired

1. In separate medium bowls, cover dried shiitake mushrooms and wood ear mushrooms with at least 1 cup hot water each. Let the mushrooms soak for 20 minutes or until tender throughout.
2. Strain and gently rinse the mushrooms with water. Squeeze out the excess water from shiitake mushrooms; rub off any debris. Remove and discard the tough stems and mince the caps, yielding about $\frac{1}{4}$ cup loosely packed minced shiitakes. Remove and discard the tough parts of wood ear mushrooms, mince mushrooms if big or thinly slice if small, yielding about $\frac{1}{2}$ cup loosely packed minced wood ear mushrooms.
3. Cook dried rice vermicelli according to the package directions. Strain the cooked vermicelli and coarsely chop the noodles into $\frac{1}{2}$ inch pieces.
4. In a large nonstick skillet, heat 2 Tablespoons peanut oil over medium heat until hot. Add garlic and ginger, stirring a few times to release the fragrance. Add shiitake mushrooms, wood ear mushrooms, and carrots; cook and stir for 2 minutes. Add cabbage, 1 Tablespoon soy sauce, Shaoxing wine, and curry powder. Cook and stir for another 2 minutes, until the cabbage turns tender and all the liquid has evaporated. Transfer to a large plate to cool to room temperature.
5. Heat another 2 Tablespoons of peanut oil in same pan. Add tofu and cook for 1 minute, breaking it up into smaller chunks with a spatula. Add vermicelli, the remaining 2 Tablespoons soy sauce, and maple syrup. Cook and stir until all the liquid has evaporated, about 2 minutes. Transfer to a large mixing bowl; let cool to room temperature.
6. Once the tofu and cabbage mixtures have cooled, add cabbage mixture to the bowl with the tofu, add scallions, stir to mix well.
7. Prepare your workstation by placing a plate with the dumpling wrappers, the bowl of dumpling filling with a spoon or Tablespoon scooper, a small bowl of water, and a large plate or tray to hold the folded dumplings.
8. Place a dumpling wrapper on the palm of one hand and, using the other hand, spoon about 1 Tablespoon of dumpling filling on the center of the wrapper. Still using this hand, dip your finger into the bowl of water; use it to wet the edges of the wrapper,, then fold the edges of the wrapper over the filling; seal them together. Press edges again to seal well. You can use any method you are comfortable with to fold the dumplings. (If cooking lots of dumplings, cover with a damp towel so the dumplings don't dry out.)
9. To cook the dumplings, heat the remaining 1 Tablespoon peanut oil in a large nonstick skillet over medium heat until hot. Add the dumplings in batches in a single layer. Cook until the bottoms turn golden. Add 2 Tablespoons of water; cover; cook until dumplings are cooked through, about 2 to 3 minutes; immediately transfer the dumplings to a large plate. Repeat with the remaining dumplings.
10. Serve the dumplings immediately with dipping sauce; garnish with sliced scallions (green onions) Yield: about 50 dumplings

Recipe by: Maggie Zhu, *Chinese Homestyle*, Vegetable Dumplings, p. 97, Quarto Publishing Group Inc., 2022.

Notes from Maggie Zhu:

p. 93 Suggested **Dipping Sauce:**

1-1/2 Tablespoons soy sauce, 1 Tablespoon Chinkiang vinegar, ¼ teaspoon sugar, with 1 Tablespoon water; mix until sugar is dissolved.

Storage for Dumplings:

Now you can freeze these dumplings cooked or uncooked. Place them onto a baking tray and seal them in with a plastic wrap. You can store the dumplings in the freezer for up to 1 month. Once dumplings are frozen, transfer to a zipper freezer bag if desired. You won't have to thaw frozen dumplings to cook or reheat them. To cook uncooked dumplings, cook them like the fresh dumplings, but when covered in the pan, cook for 2 to 3 minutes longer and with a bit more water, about ¼ cup.

About the Recipe: These dumplings are filled with a well-balanced texture, combining veggies, tofu, and rice vermicelli. They are seasoned with aromatics, soy sauce, and a dash of curry powder, which enhances their richness. Dumplings are eaten during the Spring Festival to usher in the Lunar New Year, which marks new beginnings, harmony, and prosperity.