

Recipe by Joanne Chang

Mama Chang's Pork and Chive with Black Pepper Scallion Sauce

Makes about 40 to 50 dumplings

Making dumplings with my mom is one of the earliest childhood food memories I have. I remember Mom setting up the kitchen table with a huge bowl of filling, dumpling wrappers covering the whole table, and the two of us going to town folding as fast as we could before the wrappers dried out. Well, she folded as fast as she could; the folded dumplings looked like little couches to me and I would play house with them and my dozens of Lego people. My brother was a notoriously picky eater and he ate about 4 things, dumplings being one of them. So Mom would make and freeze them on the weekends and pull them out during the week for his dinner. The first thing she and my dad do when they visit us in Boston is make a trip to Myers+Chang, sit at the food bar, and order these to make sure we are still making them properly. She's never shy about sharing her feedback. We all watch her out of the corner of our eye and breath a sigh when she gives a thumbs up.

- 8 large Napa cabbage leaves
- 1 tablespoon kosher salt
- 1 pound ground pork (don't choose super lean ground pork or your dumplings will be dry)
- 1 cup minced garlic chives (or substitute regular chives)
- 3 tablespoons soy sauce
- 1 tablespoon peeled and finely chopped fresh ginger (about 1-inch knob)
- 2 teaspoons sesame oil, roasted or toasted and deep amber in color
- 1 package round wheat dumpling wrappers (we like Twin Marquis Brand)
- 4 tablespoons vegetable oil, such as canola, divided, plus more as needed

Thinly slice the Napa cabbage and place in a large bowl with the salt. Toss well and set aside for at least 10 minutes. In a large bowl combine the ground pork, garlic chives, soy sauce, ginger, and sesame oil and use your hands to mix all the ingredients thoroughly together. Set aside.

Take the cabbage in your hands and squeeze as hard as you can. You will be amazed by the amount of water that comes out. Squeeze as much water as you can out and add the cabbage to the pork mixture. Again, mix well with your hands until filling is well combined.

Fill a small bowl with warm water. Lay a dumpling wrapper on a work surface and scoop about 1 tablespoon of filling in the center of the wrapper. Dip your finger in the water and paint all around the edge of the wrapper to moisten. Fold the wrapper over in half to look like a half moon. (This always reminds me of making a taco shell.) Pinch just the top of the wrapper together, leaving the sides exposed and open. Start pleating the left side of the dumpling: hold the dumpling on the top, fold a pleat on one side of the wrapper about halfway down the arc towards the center of the dumpling and press it into the facing side of the wrapper. Repeat the pleating almost to the bottom of the arc so that you have two pleats on the left side of the dumpling. Repeat the pleating process on the right side of the dumpling again pleating towards the center. When the dumpling is completely pleated you should be able to sit the dumpling on its bottom and it will look like a little loveseat. The smooth side of the dumpling will be the seat and the pleated side will be the back of the couch. Continue

with the rest of the dumpling wrappers and filling until the filling is used up. Dumplings may be made in advance and stored uncooked in the freezer in airtight container.

The easiest way to freeze them is to place them on a flat plate or tray in the freezer until dumplings are completely frozen and then place the frozen dumplings in a resealable freezer bag or an airtight container. Thaw in the refrigerator on a flat plate before cooking.

You need a large, heavy, flat-bottomed skillet with a lid or a nonstick skillet with a lid. Heat the skillet over medium high heat and add 2 tablespoons of the oil. When the oil heats and starts to shimmer, carefully add as many dumplings as will comfortably fit in the skillet and turn the heat down to medium. Cook without moving the pan until the dumpling bottoms brown, about 3 minutes. Check by lifting them up with your fingers and peeking underneath. When the bottoms of the dumplings are a deep golden brown, add about 2 tablespoons of water to the bottom of the pan and immediately cover with the lid. The pan will sizzle and steam up immediately so don't be startled. Shake the pan from time to time to keep the dumplings from sticking. Let the dumplings steam for 2 minutes, at which point most of the water will have evaporated. Add another 2 tablespoons of water to the pan, cover again, and steam again. Wait till the water has mostly evaporated again and repeat one last time with a final 2 tablespoons of water. Turn off the heat, keep covered, and rest for 1 minute. Uncover and turn the heat back to medium high and crisp up the bottoms. Remove from the pan. Continue cooking all of the dumplings in the same manner, adding 1 tablespoon of oil to the pan at a time as needed. Serve immediately with Black Pepper Scallion Sauce.

Black Pepper Scallion Sauce

Makes just over [1/2] cup

- 2 scallions, white and green parts finely chopped (about 2 tablespoons)
- 1 medium garlic clove, peeled and minced
- 2 tablespoons white sugar
- 2 tablespoons black Chinkiang vinegar
- 1 [1/2] tablespoons soy sauce
- 1 tablespoon sriracha chili sauce
- 1 tablespoon vegetable oil, such as canola
- 1 tablespoon sesame oil, roasted or toasted and deep amber in color
- 1 tablespoon chili oil
- 1 tablespoon fresh ground black pepper

Place the scallions, garlic, sugar, black vinegar, soy sauce, sriracha, vegetable oil, sesame oil, chili oil, and black pepper in a blender and blend quickly until combined but not totally smooth. Store in the refrigerator in an airtight container for up to 1 month. Stir well before using.

LaiSun Keane would like to thank chef Joanne Chang for generously sharing her family recipe. Joanne Chang is an award winning Boston based chef, co-owner of Flour Bakery and Myers + Chang and author of several cook books namely Flour, Flour, Too, Pastry Love and Myers+Chang At Home.

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