

Chinese Cooking Goes American

Perhaps it was fate. Just as Americans were looking for quick-cooking ideas to go with their busy lifestyles and a healthy, nutritious way of eating, along came a new interest in Chinese cooking. Considering the thousands of years it took to develop this ancient and honorable cuisine, it has taken amazingly few years for Americans to "go Chinese." And what's also interesting is the speed with which Chinese cooking has "gone American."

It isn't that basic cooking techniques have changed. They haven't. Stir-frying, steaming, simmering, grilling and roasting remain Chinese mainstays, even in America. But Americans have found that Chinese cuisine adapts very well to western kitchen equipment and American ingredients. Corn oil, made from natural corn, is ideal for Chinese cooking and is the preferred oil of many Chinese-American cooks. The original thickener for Chinese dishes may have been water-chestnut flour but today, all over the world, corn starch thickens sauces to a classic translucence. And Karo corn syrup adds subtle sweetness to sweet and sour dishes. Because the syrup is already in liquid form, it blends in easily and provides a smooth light and balanced taste to stir-fry combinations. And corn syrup enhances the consistency of Chinese-inspired sauces and glazes.

In Chinese cooking, preparation can, and should, be done in advance. For many dishes, especially stir-fry ones, this means chopping, cutting or slicing fresh foods into attractive evenly-sized pieces. Planning the combination of shapes and colors, textures and tastes becomes almost an art form and adds to the enjoyment of Chinese cooking. When actual cooking time arrives, it is nearly time to eat. Cooking is done quickly and at controlled high temperatures. Using just the right temperature for just the right amount of time keeps natural flavors, colors and textures at their best. Vitamins are sealed in and the foods are fairly bursting with goodness.

Is it, therefore, any surprise that all America has "gone Chinese?"

Saucy Butterfly Shrimp

Batter (recipe follows)
1/2 cup rice wine vinegar
1/3 cup dark corn syrup
1/3 cup catchup
1/4 cup pineapple juice
1/2 teaspoon salt

1 tablespoon corn starch
mixed with 2 tablespoons
water
16 jumbo shrimp, peeled,
deveined
2 cups corn oil

Prepare batter. In 2-quart saucepan stir together vinegar, corn syrup, catchup, pineapple juice and salt. Stirring frequently, bring to boil over medium heat. Restir corn starch-water mixture; stir into sauce mixture. Stirring constantly, bring to boil and boil 1 minute. Keep warm. Cutting almost through shrimp, cut lengthwise along inner curve and flatten. Pat shrimp dry with paper towels. Pour corn oil into electric skillet to depth of 1/4-inch. Heat to 375°F. Dip shrimp into batter. Fry, a few at a time, about 4 minutes, turning once or until golden. Drain on paper towels. Serve with sauce. Makes 4 servings.

Batter

In medium bowl stir together 1/3 cup flour and 2 tablespoons corn starch. Gradually stir in 1/4 cup water, 1 tablespoon dry sherry and 2 eggs, lightly beaten. Stir in 1/3 cup chopped green onions.

Stir-Fry Beef and Broccoli

1 tablespoon corn starch
1/4 teaspoon pepper
1/3 cup dry sherry
1/4 cup soy sauce
1/4 cup dark corn syrup
3/4 pound beef top round steak
3 medium carrots
5 tablespoons corn oil, divided
2 cups broccoli flowerets
3 small onions, cut in thin
wedges
1/2 cup sliced water chestnuts
1 clove garlic, minced or
pressed

In small bowl stir together corn starch and pepper. Gradually stir in sherry, soy sauce and corn syrup until smooth; set aside. Cut beef diagonally across grain into very thin slices, then cut into 2-inch strips. Roll cut carrots into 1/4-inch pieces by making angle cut and then giving the carrot a quarter-turn before angle cutting again. In large skillet or wok heat 3 tablespoons of the corn oil over medium-high heat. Add carrots, broccoli, onions, water chestnuts and garlic. Stir fry 3 to 4 minutes or until tender-crisp. Remove from pan. Heat remaining 2 tablespoons corn oil. Add beef, 1/3 at a time, stir fry 1 minute or until browned. Return all beef and vegetables to skillet. Restir corn starch mixture; stir into beef-vegetable mixture. Stirring constantly, bring to boil over medium heat and boil 1 minute. Serve over rice. Makes 4 servings.

Sweet and Sour Pork with Oranges

2 tablespoons corn oil
1 pound boneless pork, cut in
thin strips
1 cup orange juice
1/2 cup light or dark corn syrup
1/3 cup cider vinegar
2 tablespoons soy sauce
1 clove garlic, minced or
pressed
1 cup cubed green and sweet
red pepper
1/2 cup sliced green onions
3 tablespoons corn starch
mixed with 6 tablespoons
water
1 cup orange sections

In wok or large skillet heat corn oil over medium-high heat. Add pork, 1/2 at a time, stirring constantly, brown on all sides. Add orange juice, corn syrup, vinegar, soy sauce and garlic. Bring to boil. Reduce heat and simmer, stirring occasionally, 10 minutes or until pork is tender. Add pepper and green onions. Restir corn starch-water mixture; stir into pork mixture. Stirring constantly, bring to boil over medium heat and boil 1 minute. Stir in oranges. Makes 4 servings.

Chinese Spareribs

1 cup catchup
1/2 cup dark corn syrup
1/4 cup corn oil
1/4 cup dry sherry
1/4 cup soy sauce
2 cloves garlic, minced or
pressed
1 teaspoon pepper
4 pounds spareribs, cut into
ribs

In small bowl stir together catchup, corn syrup, corn oil, sherry, soy sauce, garlic and pepper until blended; set aside. Place ribs bone side up on rack in broiler pan; broil 6 inches from source of heat about 20 minutes. Turn meaty side up and broil 5 minutes or until browned. Baste with catchup mixture. Broil, turning and basting frequently, 10 to 15 minutes longer or until crisp. Makes 4 servings.

Grilled Chinese Spareribs: Follow recipe for Chinese Spareribs. Place ribs bone side down on grill over slow coals. Grill about 20 minutes. Turn meaty side down and grill about 5 minutes or until browned. Brush with catchup mixture. Grill, turning and basting frequently, 20 minutes longer or until thoroughly cooked. Makes 4 servings.

Oriental Pineapple Chicken


1 can (8 oz) pineapple slices
in own juice
1 (3 lb) broiler-fryer chicken
1/2 cup dark corn syrup
2 tablespoons corn oil
2 tablespoons dry sherry
2 tablespoons thinly sliced
green onion
1/2 teaspoon ground ginger
1/2 teaspoon salt
1/8 teaspoon pepper
1-1/2 tablespoons corn starch
3/4 cup chicken broth
1 small green pepper, cut in
very thin slices

Drain pineapple; reserve juice. Cut each pineapple slice into three sections. Place chicken, breast side up, on rack in shallow baking pan. Roast in 400°F oven 1 hour. In small bowl stir together reserved juice, corn syrup, corn oil, sherry, onion, ginger, salt and pepper. Baste chicken with some of the pineapple juice mixture. Continue roasting, basting frequently, with remaining pineapple juice mixture about 30 minutes or until chicken is tender. Remove chicken to serving platter; keep warm. In small bowl stir together corn starch and broth until smooth. Stir into mixture in pan. Stirring constantly, bring to boil over medium heat and boil 1 minute. Stir in pineapple slices and green pepper until heated through. Spoon over chicken. Makes 4 servings.



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Watch local supermarkets for details of Karo's "Go Chinese" recipe contest featuring a trip to China.