



T u e s d a y , J u l y 2 8 , 2 0 0 9

**Stir Fry 101**

## IN YOUR BOX...

- Beets
- Broccoli
- Chinese Cabbage
- Cucumbers
- Green Beans
- Green Pepper
- Head Lettuce →  
Buttercrunch
- Kohlrabi
- New Potatoes
- Pak Choi (Pictured)
- Scallions
- Summer Squash →  
Zucchini / Patty Pans

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

- RAIN! We've been gifted well over an inch in the last couple of days and the garden has let out a sigh of contentment. Many of the flowers we have planted to attract beneficial insects are just starting to paint the space with more color, and the rain only speeds that process up.
- The corn is tassling!

A traditional round-bottom iron pan called a wok is heated to a high temperature. A small amount of cooking oil is then poured down the side of the wok, followed by dry seasonings (including ginger and garlic), then at the first moment the seasonings can be smelled, meats are added and agitated. Once the meat is seared, vegetables along with liquid ingredients (for example often including premixed combinations of some of soy sauce, vinegar, wine, salt, sugar, and cornstarch) are added. The wok then may be covered for a moment so the water in the liquid ingredients can warm up the new ingredients as it steams off. To keep the meat juicy, usually a cook would take the seared meat out before vegetables are added, and put the meat back right before vegetables are done. In some dishes, or if the cooking conditions are inadequate, different components may be stir fried separately before being combined in the final dish.

The food is stirred and tossed out very quickly using wooden or metal cooking utensils. Some chefs will lift the wok to the side to let the flame light the oil or add a dash of wine spirit to give the food extra flavor. Using this method, many dishes can be cooked extremely quickly (within a minute).

Some dishes that require more time are cooked by adding a few dashes of water after the stirring. Then the wok is covered with a lid. As soon as steam starts to come out from under the lid, the dish is ready. In this case, the food is stir fried on high heat for flavor and then steamed to ensure that it is fully cooked.

This is an extremely noisy way of cooking. The metal utensils will clatter with the wok, making loud sounds. Be cautious of pieces of metal and rust on the wok that may combine with the food to create excessive intake of iron and steel. As in the Western method of frying, this is one of the dangerous high heat cooking methods which create heterocyclic contents in the foods, causing many elements of the food to turn carcinogenic. Many Chinese suffer from stomach cancer as a result of consuming too much of food cooked this way. However, if you use cast iron pans (avoid Teflon coated pans if at all possible) and try to use slightly less heat, this method allows the chef to cook healthy food for an army of people. In addition, the oil and aromatics make the food delicious. Like the Indian curry-cooking method, this is an ingenious way of salvaging food that is otherwise non-edible and wasted (wikipedia.org).



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### Stir-Fried Chicken with Broccoli, Bell Pepper, and Zucchini

Source: Food to Live By

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| 1/2 Cup soy sauce                              | 1 T minced garlic                              |
| 2 T brown sugar                                | 2 T grated peeled fresh ginger                 |
| 2 tsp unseasoned rice vinegar                  | 4 C bite –size broccoli florets                |
| ¼ tsp dried red pepper flakes                  | 1 bell pepper, cut into ¼ inch strips          |
| 1 T cornstarch                                 | 1 ½ lbs skinless, chicken breast, ½ inch cubes |
| 2 T toasted sesame oil                         | ½ C thinly sliced onion                        |
| 4 T peanut oil                                 | 3 C cooked rice or soba noodles for serving    |
| 2 medium zucchini or patty pan (1/2 inch dice) | ½ C cashews, for garnish                       |

1. Place soy sauce, brown sugar, vinegar, chili sauce, cornstarch, and ¾ C water in a small bowl and whisk to combine. Set aside.
2. Place a large skillet over medium-high heat and add 1 T of the sesame oil and 1 T of the peanut oil. Add the zucchini and cook, stirring constantly, until it is tender and golden, 4 to 6 minutes. Using a slotted spoon, transfer the zucchini to a large bowl.
3. Add 1 T of the peanut oil to the skillet. Add the garlic and ginger and cook for 30 seconds, stirring constantly. Add the broccoli and ½ C of water and cook, stirring constantly, until the broccoli is crisp-tender, 3 to 4 minutes. Transfer to the bowl with the zucchini.
4. Add 1 T of peanut oil to the skillet. Add the bell pepper and cook, stirring constantly, about 3 minutes. Transfer to the bowl with zucchini and broccoli.
5. Add the remaining 1 T each of the sesame oil and peanut oil to the skillet. Add the chicken and cook, stirring constantly, until cooked through. Add the soy sauce mixture and stir until the sauce thickens., 1 to 2 minutes.
6. Add the reserved zucchini, broccoli, and pepper and the scallions to the chicken. Cook until the vegetables are just heated through, about 3 minutes. Serve the stir-fried mixture immediately with the rice and sprinkle the cashews on top.

**Pak Choi** – Pak Choi is a very versatile Asian vegetable like its relative Chinese Cabbage and it is referred to by many different names including Chinese celery cabbage, Chinese white or green cabbage, and mustard cabbage. To further add to the confusion, Pak Choi grows in a wide variety of shapes. These include the white-stemmed type, soup spoon type, squat or Canton type.

All stages of Pak Choi may be used in cooking and the whole plant is edible. To prepare Pak Choi, remove the outer leaves. If you choose to cook Pak Choi, be sure not to overcook it or the flavor will be destroyed.

Pak Choi may be eaten raw, steamed, stir-fried, or fermented. If stir-frying, chop leaves and stem and add them to the wok at the last minute.

### Traditional Kim Chi

Source: drbenkim.com

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| Chinese cabbage - approximately one pound    | 1 tablespoon of fresh ginger, finely chopped   |
| 4 cups of cold water                         | 1 tablespoon of fresh green onions (scallions), finely chopped                                 |
| 3 tablespoons of sea salt                    | 1 teaspoon of dried red chili pepper flakes (more if you like things spicy, less if you don't) |
| 1 tablespoon of fresh garlic, finely chopped | 1.5 to 2 teaspoons of sugar  |

Separate and wash cabbage leaves. Sprinkle 2 tablespoons of sea or kosher salt evenly on cabbage leaves. Place salted cabbage leaves in a large bowl, add 4 cups of cold water, cover with plastic wrap, and place in refrigerator overnight. Be sure that water covers all cabbage leaves - place a plate or other heavy object on top of leaves to ensure that they stay covered with water.

The next day, pour off water and thoroughly rinse cabbage leaves. You can shake them gently in the sink to remove excess moisture.

Place cabbage leaves back into large bowl and add garlic, green onion or scallions, ginger, dried red chili flakes, sugar, and 1 tablespoon of salt. Use your hands to rub seasoning evenly into all cabbage leaves. Be sure to use gloves to do this, otherwise, your hands will burn from the chili flakes. If you are pressed for time, mix seasoning ingredients with about a cup of warm water before adding them to cabbage to allow for easier distribution on cabbage leaves.

Transfer seasoned cabbage leaves into a large glass bottle. Be sure to use firm pressure with your hands to push down on cabbage leaves as they stack up inside the bottle. Transfer any liquid that accumulated during the mixing process into the bottle as well - it will become kim chi brine. Some liquid will also come out of the cabbage leaves as you press down on them as they are stacked in the bottle.

Leave about 2 inches of room at the top of the bottle before capping it tightly with a lid. Allow bottle of kim chi to sit at room temperature for 2-3 days.

Your kim chi is now ready to eat. Use scissors or a knife and cutting board to cut cabbage leaves into 2 inch pieces before serving as a side dish to a bowl of rice, soup, and perhaps a piece of fish. Refrigerate remaining kim chi and take out small portions right before meals. The refrigerated kim chi will continue to ferment slowly in the refrigerator over time, becoming more sour and flavorful with each passing day. So long as you use clean utensils to take out small portions, it will keep for up to a month in your refrigerator.