

Char Siu Baos

Char Siu Pork ~ Sweet and Sticky Fatty Pork:

Ingredients:

- 3 lbs boneless, skinless pork shoulder/ butt/ ribs (select a piece with really nice fat running through it)
- 1 tbsp Chinese 5 Spice*
- 1 tbsp ginger paste
- 1 tbsp garlic paste
- 1 tsp salt
- ¼ cup black vinegar (use regular vinegar if you don't have this)
- ½ cup soy sauce
- ¼ cup sugar
- ½ cup oyster sauce (I used a mix of oyster sauce and hoisin sauce because I didn't have enough of either)
- ¼ cup water
- 1 tbsp cornstarch

Directions:

This recipe is quite simple; mix everything into a bowl and rub your pork with the marinade in every nook and cranny. This is best marinated overnight but if you can't wait for that long, at least 4 hours should do.

Once marinated, prepare your baking sheet with a piece of foil on the bottom and a cooking rack on top. This marinade has sugar so as soon as it hits heat, it will start to caramelize and in the oven, burn, so it is best to have foil at the bottom. Preheat your oven to 350 degrees Fahrenheit and place the pork onto the rack. Place the remaining marinade into a saucepan. Cook your pork in the oven anywhere from 40 - 60 minutes depending on the thickness and fattiness of your pork; I don't have a meat thermometer at home so it's mainly a game of chance to check the doneness of meat. My test is the outside- it should be slightly charred, the marinade all sticky and dark and the meat should be firm. You can always cut a slice to check if needed (no one will know).

While your meat is cooking, you can start reducing your marinade. Though there was raw meat in it, cooking it off will make it safe to eat. On medium low heat, bring your sauce to a simmer. In a separate small bowl, create a slurry of the cornstarch and water. Add it to your sauce and cook for 3 - 5 minutes until you see slow, big bubbles. Add soy sauce, sugar and black vinegar

to taste (if needed). When the pork is halfway done (around 25 minutes) baste the pork with this reduced sauce; use a basting brush or spoon.

Once your meat is cooled down, you can slice it into ¼ inch pieces.. If serving immediately, there is no further preparation but this can be cut in advance and heated up on the stove before cooking.

Notes:

If you don't have Chinese 5 Spice, don't feel the need to buy it. You probably already have the ingredients at home. If you have any of the whole (ground will work too), toast some cinnamon, cloves, fennel seeds, black peppercorns (sichuan peppercorns if you have) and star anise. Even if you only have a few of these spices that's fine. Toast them on a pan and then blend them up into a fine powder.

Baos ~ Fluffy Steamed Buns [[recipe adapted from Seonkyoung Longest](#)]:

Ingredients:

- ½ cup warm water
- ½ cup warm milk
- 1 tbsp active dry yeast
- 3 tbsp + 1 tbsp sugar
- 2 tbsp canola oil plus extra
- 2.5 to 3 cups all purpose flour (plus more if needed)
- ½ tsp baking powder
- ½ tsp salt

Directions:

The first thing for any risen dough is the yeast. In your mixing bowl, combine the warm milk, warm water and 1 tbsp sugar. Make sure this mixture is actually warm by sticking your finger in it- as Goldilocks would say, it should be 'just right'! Not too hot and not too cold otherwise you will either kill your yeast or not give it enough 'umph' to grow. Once you are sure your liquid is warm, add in your yeast, mix it around and let it sit for 5 or so minutes until you see bubbles. You will know when it is active because you will see about one or two inches risen off the water of bubbly yeast.

Once your yeast is activated, add in the rest of the ingredients and knead (either by hand or using a machine) until well combined. Start with 2.5 cups of flour and add the remaining half cup if needed. Lightly flour your surface and give it a few more kneads, finally wrapping it into a ball and letting it rest in a bowl for 2 hours.

Once risen, roll out into a ¼ inch slab and using a mug (any will do) cut out circles. Pull on the edges of the circle to form an oval, lightly oil it and fold it over into a half moon shape. The oil will help the dough from sticking to each other when steaming. Place onto your steamer lined with parchment paper and let it rise again for another 30 - 45 minutes. Make sure buns are spaced out by 1 inch.

During the last few minutes of rising, bring a pot (that's bigger than your steamer) of water to boil. Place your steamer in the pot with the lid on top (tie a towel on top of the steamer to soak in the condensation) and let the buns steam for 10 minutes. Let cool and serve fresh!

Condiments ~ Quick Pickled Veggies, Salted Onions, Spicy Mayo:

Quick Pickle Vegetable Ingredients:

- 2 carrots + 2 persian cucumbers (any hard vegetables will do)
- 1 tsp salt
- ¼ cup rice vinegar
- 2 tsp sugar

Directions:

Prepare your vegetables by cutting them into thin strips. Place in a big bowl. In a small bowl, combine the rest of the ingredients and microwave for 30 seconds until the sugar is dissolved. Mix with the vegetables and let it cool; this should be done in advance and be kept in the fridge until serving.

Salted Onions Ingredients:

- ½ red onion thinly sliced
- 1 tsp salt
- 1 jalapeno or serrano pepper thinly sliced

Directions:

Combine all your ingredients in a bowl and let sit for 10 minutes or until the onions have released their liquid. Squeeze out the liquid and rinse with water. Set aside until serving.

Spicy Mayo Ingredients:

- ¼ cup mayo (I like to use the Japanese Kewpie Mayo)
- 2 tbsp chili garlic sauce (Sriacha, Sambal...etc.)
- 1 tbsp water

Directions:

Combine all your ingredients in a bowl until everything is well mixed.

Assembly:

Before your baos are done cooking, everything else should be prepped and ready to eat. Make sure your meat and baos are warm and vegetables are cool. Assemble by opening the baos, adding a layer of spicy mayo, slices of pork, reduced sauce, pickled vegetables, salted onions, cilantro or spring onions and some sesame seeds. There are many variations of these baos served so feel free to try some different combinations. Enjoy!