

TASTE THE WORLD

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Prawns and (Green Flower) Broccoli – Guo Yue (China)

Ingredients:

2 large heads of fresh broccoli torn by hand into little florets
Sunflower oil
4 spring onions washed and divided in half lengthwise and finely chopped
25 tiger prawns. Peeled and deveined
3 teaspoons of Chinese cooking rice wine
Sesame seed oil
Sea salt

Method:

First, bring some water to the boil and add the broccoli florets, cooking them for 3 minutes before draining through a colander. Heat your wok until it is warm and add 1 1/2 tablespoons of sunflower oil. Continue to heat until oil is hot, almost smoking, then add the spring onion, creating a percussive sound. After about 5 seconds, when the sound has quietened and the spring onion has curled, add the prawns. Stir them with a wooden spoon until they turn a reddish color. Now add the broccoli florets and toss, or move around in the wok with a wooden spoon. Finally add the cooking wine, a drizzle of sesame oil and a few pinches of salt to taste. Give a final toss, combining all the ingredients, to ensure that the broccoli absorbs all the natural flavors while retaining its distinctive texture and emerald green color.

Trout with Coriander

This is a modern Chinese dish. It is a fresh and natural dish in which green coriander contrasts with the white fish and every ingredient can be tasted individually. The fish is extremely light, delicate and tender – and my children love it.

Ingredients:

8 spring onion – cut off the green sections, and put to one side: divide the onions in half lengthwise and continue dividing them until you have very thin strips; Slice these diagonally; then prepare the green parts of the onion in exactly the same way.
10 slices of ginger from a medium bulb, peeled and cut into very thin strips
6 cloves of garlic, crushed and finely chopped
4 tspns of white caster sugar
2 tablespoon Western red or white wine vinegar
3 tablespoons light soy sauce
1 tablespoon Chinese cooking rice wine
2 whole trout, medium size
A small bunch of fresh coriander
4 tablespoon sunflower oil
2 fresh small red chilli pepper (optional) chopped lengthwise into fine strips, following the shape of the chilli
Sesame seed oil to flavour

March 9-11 Botanic Park ADELAIDE

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Method:

First put the water on to boil and then prepare all the ingredients as described above. Place the spring onion, ginger, garlic, and sugar in a bowl and then spoon in the vinegar, soya sauce and rice wine. Mix well. When the water is boiling, put in the fish so that it is completely covered, and turn down the heat to prevent over-boiling. Allow to boil for 7 minutes, until the trout is tender. Take the fish out carefully and place it in a long dish. Pour on the mixture so that it completely coats the trout. Heap the chopped coriander on top.

Now prepare the sunflower oil; it is essential to get this right. First, heat your wok until warm and then add the oil. Turn the heat up high for a few minutes, until the oil is smoking – at this point it is extremely hot, so be very careful! But also, don't be too timid, because if the oil isn't hot enough the dish won't work at all. At this point, once the oil is smoking, add the chilli (optional) and, after a few seconds carefully pour the oil all over the fish. It should make a dramatic crackling sound as the tastes of all the ingredients are absorbed and combined. This sound means your dish is very successful! Finally add a few drops of sesame oil, and the trout is ready to be taken to the table. Serve accompanied by steamed rice.

Woodland Dish

One of Yue's mother's favorite dishes in shades of cream, yellow and brown which uses some of the fascinating dried and preserved ingredients in Chinese cooking; bamboo shoots, dried mushrooms, wood-ear and lily flower, which in his childhood were all highly rationed. The ingredients, like the colors and textures are beautifully balanced, providing a wealth of nutrition and an earthy intensity, without any extremes. My mother used to say that this dish was a favorite among Buddhist monks, before Buddhism was banned in China. The fried mushrooms will need to come from a specialist Chinese grocer. It is essential to soak them thoroughly, so do this one hour before beginning the other preparation. There are two main types of dried wood-ear (tree fungus): one is big with a thicker texture, and another that is small and much finer: try to buy the smaller.

Ingredients:

A large handful each of dried wood-ear and dried lily flower
4 eggs well beaten
2 spring onions, washed and finely chopped
sea salt
sunflower oil
1 large or 2 small tins of bamboo shoots – remove from the tin and drain and chop very finely (the traditional technique is called 'shredding')
2 large white potatoes peeled – cut into thin slices, then shred into fine matchstick pieces
1 large 'bai-cai' (Chinese leaf) - wash and remove the outer leaves, then chop finely
light soy sauce
White caster sugar
Chinese cooking rice wine
2 cloves of garlic, peeled, crushed and very finely chopped
Sesame seed oil

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Method:

One hour before beginning the rest of the preparation, place the dried ingredients – the Chinese mushrooms, wood-ear and lily flower – in a bowl, pour hot water from the kettle over them and leave to soak for about an hour. Once they have uncurled and opened, wash them thoroughly. Then, taking each wood-ear, remove any lumps that you find; these will be sandy inside and should not be eaten. Then wash again in a colander and squeeze with your hands to remove excess water, before slicing, if they are large. With the lily-flowers, after soaking them, chop the hard end off each one – this was the flower. Otherwise, keep the natural shapes of all these ingredients.

Next, after all chopping preparation, add half of the spring onions to the beaten eggs in a bowl and then add a couple of pinches of salt. Heat your wok, add 2 tablespoons of sunflower oil and continue heating until it begins to smoke. Add the egg mixture and as it cooks, turning a golden colour, break it up with chopsticks and a spatula. Put to one side.

Now pour 3 tablespoons of sunflower oil to the wok and heat until smoking again. Add the other half of the spring onions and you should hear a percussive sound; this means your oil is hot enough.

Now add all the other prepared vegetables and move around in the wok for a few minutes, adding 2 more pinches of salt. Next add the egg mixture and then stirring continuously, the following in succession: 2-3 tablespoons of light soy sauce, 1-2 teaspoon of caster sugar, 2-4 teaspoons of cooking rice wine, the chopped garlic and a final drizzle of sesame seed oil.

The addition of these final five ingredients creates a beautiful depth of taste.

GUO YUE'S BOOK "MUSIC FOOD AND LOVE" IS ON SALE AT THE WOSHOP

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