

TASTE THE WORLD ~ RECIPES

Steamed egg custard with prawns and shiitake

Poh Ling Yeow (Australia/Malaysia) – host of ABC TV’s “Poh’s Kitchen”

Serves 4

INGREDIENTS

160g peeled uncooked prawn flesh, chopped

2 teaspoons shaoxing rice wine

Pinch of white pepper

½ teaspoon sugar

1 teaspoon soy sauce

4 large or 12 small shiitake mushrooms, soaked in hot water for 20 minutes, drained and squeezed

4 large free-range eggs

1 ¼ cups (310ml) chicken stock

Pinch of salt and white pepper

TOPPING

1 spring onion, finely chopped

2 teaspoons light soy sauce

1 ½ tablespoons peanut or vegetable oil with a few drops of sesame oil mixed in

I absolutely adore this dish and strangely it’s one I always forget to pull out of the hat considering it’s delicious and so quick to make. Both the Japanese and the Chinese do a version of this. In Japan, it’s called chawanmushi, which means ‘steamed in a tea cup’ and in China, it’s referred to as ‘soi tan’, which means ‘watery egg’. The texture is divinely silky and you can steam it with any seafood you like.

My sister in law, Teena, does a fantastic version with century and salted duck eggs, which my little nephews go crazy over.

METHOD

Half fill a wok with water; place a large bamboo steamer on top. Ensure the steamer will hold four Chinese rice bowls or ramekins around 25 centimetres in diameter comfortably.

Combine the chopped prawns, shaoxing, pepper, sugar and soy sauce and set aside to marinate for ten minutes.

Remove and discard the woody stems of the shiitake and slice. Set aside.

In a bowl, briefly mix the eggs, stock and salt and pepper. Using a pair of chopsticks do slow figure eights to do the mixing, rather than madly whisking, you will achieve a much silkier result.

Divide the prawns, mushrooms and egg mixture into the four bowls and steam with the bamboo lid on for seven to ten minutes. The custards should be an opaque creamy colour when done and still very wobbly.

Remove the bowls from the steamer; sprinkle each one with the chopped spring onion and half teaspoon of the soy sauce. Heat the peanut oil in a small saucepan, until beginning to smoke.

Immediately pour over each egg custard but be careful, there will be some spitting. Serve while hot.