

Beijing-Style Meat Sauce and Noodles (Zha Jiang Mian)



WHY THIS RECIPE WORKS

Zha jiang mian is an easy-to-make and deeply satisfying one-dish meal. Our version calls for substitutes for two ingredients which are difficult to find outside of specialty Asian markets: red miso paste and soy sauce in place of the traditional ground bean sauce and a combination of hoisin, molasses, and soy sauce as a substitute for sweet bean sauce. Shiitake mushrooms and a small amount of ground pork added even more meaty depth. We spooned the sauce over chewy lo mein noodles and finished the dish with bean sprouts, cucumber matchsticks, and scallion greens for a crisp, fresh contrast to the rich sauce.

INGREDIENTS

- 8** ounces ground pork
- 1/8** teaspoon baking soda
- 5** tablespoons red miso paste
- 5** tablespoons soy sauce
- 3** tablespoons hoisin sauce
- 1** tablespoon molasses
- 8** scallions, white and light green parts cut into 1/2-inch pieces, dark green parts sliced thin on bias
- 2** garlic cloves, peeled
- 1** (1/2-inch) piece ginger, peeled and sliced into 1/8-

INSTRUCTIONS

We prefer red miso in this recipe. You can use white miso, but the color will be lighter and the flavor milder. You can substitute 8 ounces of dried linguine for the lo mein noodles, if desired, but be sure to follow the cooking time listed on the package. For an authentic presentation, bring the bowl to the table before tossing the noodles in step 5.

- 1.** Toss pork, 2 teaspoons water, and baking soda in bowl until thoroughly combined. Let stand for 5 minutes. Whisk 1/2 cup water, miso paste, soy sauce, hoisin, and molasses together in second bowl.
- 2.** Pulse white and light green scallion parts, garlic, and ginger in food processor until coarsely chopped, 5 to 10 pulses, scraping down sides of bowl as needed. Add mushrooms and pulse until mixture is finely chopped, 5 to 10 pulses.

SERVES 6

- inch rounds
- 4** ounces shiitake mushroom, stemmed and sliced ½ inch thick
- 1** tablespoon vegetable oil
- 1** pound fresh lo mein noodles
- ½** English cucumber, unpeeled, cut into 2½-inch-long matchsticks (2 cups)
- 6** ounces (3 cups) bean sprouts

3. Heat oil and pork mixture in large saucepan over medium heat for 1 minute, breaking up meat with wooden spoon. Add mushroom mixture and cook, stirring frequently, until mixture is dry and just begins to stick to saucepan, 5 to 7 minutes. Add miso mixture to saucepan and bring to simmer. Cook, stirring occasionally, until mixture thickens, 8 to 10 minutes. Cover and keep warm while noodles cook.

4. Bring 4 quarts water to boil in large pot. Add noodles and cook, stirring often, until almost tender (center should still be firm with slightly opaque dot), 3 to 5 minutes. Drain noodles and transfer to wide, shallow serving bowl.

5. Ladle sauce over center of noodles and sprinkle with cucumber, sprouts, and dark green scallion parts. Toss well and serve.