

Chile Oil Wontons

By Sue Li

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Total Time 1½ hours

Prep Time 15 minutes

Cook Time 1¼ hours

Rating ★★★★★ (293)



Linda Xiao for The New York Times. Food Stylist: Monica Pierini.

This classic recipe shows you how easy — and satisfying — it is to make your own chile oil wontons at home. Here, they're shaped to resemble gold ingots, a Chinese symbol of good fortune and wealth, but feel free to wrap them however you like. A crucial step here is making the sauce for the wontons, which can be done in advance and starts with mixing your own chile oil. (Save any extra sauce to use with fried eggs, tofu, potatoes, rice, chicken or anything, really.)

INGREDIENTS

Yield: About 50 wontons

FOR THE WONTONS

1 pound ground pork or ground chicken

¼ pound large peeled and deveined shrimp, chopped into ¼-inch pieces

1 tablespoon sesame oil

1 tablespoon soy sauce

1 tablespoon Shaoxing wine or sherry (optional)

1 teaspoon ground white pepper

Kosher salt (such as Diamond Crystal)

Cornstarch, for dusting

About 50 homemade or store-bought wonton wrappers (from one 12- to 14-ounce package), thawed if frozen

FOR THE SAUCE

PREPARATION

Step 1

Make the wontons: Combine the pork, shrimp, sesame oil, soy sauce, Shaoxing wine (if using), white pepper and 1 teaspoon kosher salt in a large bowl. Mix with a spatula until the ingredients are thoroughly combined.

Step 2

Prepare your tools for wrapping the wontons: Dust a large rimmed baking sheet or large platter with cornstarch and fill a small bowl with water.

Step 3

Assemble the wontons: Hold a wonton wrapper in your hand and rotate it so it sits like a diamond, with a tip at the top. Spoon about 1 scant tablespoon of the filling in the middle of the wrapper. Dip a finger into the water and dab the top triangle of the diamond and fold in half, lifting the bottom corner to meet the top corner and aligning the wrapper edges so you get a triangular shape, then press firmly to seal. Dab some more water on one corner of the triangle and then press the opposite dry corner on top to seal. Set the wonton on the cornstarch-dusted tray or platter and proceed

6 garlic cloves, smashed and coarsely chopped into ¼-inch pieces
2 scallions, trimmed and cut into 1-inch pieces
3 tablespoons crushed red pepper
2 tablespoons white sesame seeds
1 bay leaf (dried or fresh)
1 whole star anise
⅔ cup vegetable oil
1 tablespoon sweet soy sauce
1 tablespoon dark soy sauce
1 tablespoon rice vinegar

FOR SERVING

3 tablespoons roasted, unsalted peanuts, finely ground or chopped
1 tablespoon finely ground Sichuan peppercorns (optional)
4 scallions, thinly sliced

with the rest of the filling and wrappers, making about 50 wontons.

Step 4

Cover the wontons with plastic wrap and place in the fridge while you prepare the sauce. (See Tip for freezing instructions.)

Step 5

Make the sauce: Combine the garlic, scallions, crushed red pepper, sesame seeds, bay leaf and star anise in a medium heat-proof bowl. Heat the vegetable oil in a small pot over medium-high until it is very hot and almost smoking, 4 to 5 minutes. Carefully pour the hot oil into the bowl over the garlic mixture. Allow the sizzling to subside and then add the sweet soy sauce, dark soy sauce and rice vinegar. (You can make the sauce up to 3 days in advance; keep it covered and refrigerated.)

Step 6

Make the garnish: Combine the ground peanuts, Sichuan peppercorns and ½ teaspoon kosher salt in a small bowl.

Step 7

Boil and serve the wontons: Bring a large pot of water to a boil. Cook the wontons in batches, depending on the size of your pot. Gently drop the wontons in the boiling water and cook over medium heat until they float to the top, 5 to 6 minutes. Remove the wontons with a slotted spoon or a spider, making sure to shake out the water with each removal and transfer them to a serving bowl right away.

Step 8

Spoon the sauce over the hot wontons and sprinkle with the ground peanut mixture and scallions.

TIP

If you are not ready to boil the wontons right away, tightly wrap the wontons in plastic wrap and freeze for up to 3 months. To boil from frozen: Follow the cooking instructions in Step 7, cooking the dumplings until they float to the top, 6 to 7 minutes.

Private Notes

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