

Gōngbǎo Jīdīng (Sichuan Kung Pao Chicken)

By Andrea Geary

4 Servings - Prep time 35 minutes, total time 55 minutes

Gōngbǎo jīdīng is a Sichuan classic said to be named after a Qing Dynasty official who was particularly enamored of the dish (gōngbǎo refers to his title, while jīdīng means diced chicken). The stir-fry is often referred to as kung pao chicken on Chinese restaurant menus. We started our version of the spicy, tingly dish by toasting peanuts in a skillet to maximize their crunch before setting them aside to cool. Next we toasted crushed Sichuan peppercorns and arbol chiles that we'd halved lengthwise to release their heat. We stirred in plenty of garlic and ginger and then added marinated diced chicken thighs. We covered the skillet to facilitate quick and even cooking of the chicken. When it was almost cooked through, we added some celery for crisp freshness and then a quick and concentrated sauce mixture that cooked down to a glaze. Stirring in the scallions and toasted peanuts last ensured that they retained their all-important crunch.

Ingredients

1.5	pounds boneless, skinless chicken thighs, trimmed and cut into 1/2-inch cubes
2	tablespoons soy sauce
1	tablespoon cornstarch
1	tablespoon Chinese rice wine or dry sherry
1/2	teaspoon freshly ground white pepper (or 1/4 tsp finely ground white pepper)

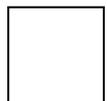
1	tablespoon Chinese black vinegar (or sherry vinegar)
1	tablespoon packed dark brown sugar
2	teaspoons toasted sesame oil
2	tablespoons soy sauce

1	tablespoon minced garlic
2	teaspoons grated fresh ginger
2	tablespoons plus 1 teaspoon vegetable oil (divided)
1/2	cup dry-roasted peanuts

10-15	dried arbol chiles, halved lengthwise and seeded (2-inch chilies)
1	teaspoon Sichuan peppercorns, ground coarse

2	celery stalks, cut into 1/2-inch slices
5	scallions, white and light green parts only, cut into 1/2-inch pieces

1/2 inch cubes



Here is the full article:

<https://www.americastestkitchen.com/articles/1171-real-kung-pao-chicken>

<https://www.americastestkitchen.com/recipes/11227-kung-pao-chicken>

Directions

1. Combine chicken, 2 tablespoons soy sauce, cornstarch, rice wine, and white pepper in medium bowl and set aside.
2. Stir vinegar, sugar, oil, and remaining 2 tablespoons soy sauce together in small bowl and set aside. Stir garlic, ginger, and 1 tablespoon oil together in second small bowl.
3. Combine peanuts and 1 teaspoon oil in 12-inch nonstick skillet over medium-low heat. Cook, stirring constantly, until peanuts just begin to darken, 3 to 5 minutes. Transfer peanuts to plate and spread into even layer to cool.
4. Return now-empty skillet to medium-low heat. Add remaining 1 tablespoon oil, arbols, and peppercorns and cook, stirring constantly, until arbols begin to darken, 1 to 2 minutes. Add garlic mixture and cook, stirring constantly, until all clumps are broken up and mixture is fragrant, about 30 seconds.
5. Add chicken and spread into even layer. Cover skillet, increase heat to medium-high, and cook, without stirring, for 1 minute. Stir chicken and spread into even layer. Cover and cook again, without stirring, for 1 minute.
6. Add celery and cook uncovered, stirring frequently, until chicken is cooked through, 2 to 3 minutes. Add soy sauce mixture and cook, stirring constantly, until sauce is thickened and shiny and coats chicken, 3 to 5 minutes.
7. Stir in scallions and peanuts. Transfer to platter and serve with white rice and a simple vegetable such as broccoli or bok choy.

Gōngbǎo jīdīng should be quite spicy. To adjust the heat level, use more or fewer chiles, depending on the size (we used 2-inch-long chiles) and your taste. Have your ingredients prepared and your equipment in place before you begin to cook. Use a spice grinder or mortar and pestle to coarsely grind the Sichuan peppercorns. If Chinese black vinegar is unavailable, substitute sherry vinegar. Do not eat the chiles.

RG notes

- Next time, use half as much chicken.
- I used 6 arbol chilies (3" long), and left the Sichuan peppercorns whole. Use 8 chilies next time.
- You need to remove the chilies from the leftovers, otherwise they will get hotter.