Stephanie Alexander KITCHEN GARDEN FOUNDATION
Growing Harvesting Preparing Sharing

Chong You Bing (Spring Onion Pancakes)

Season: All

Serves: 24 tastes

Fresh from the garden: spring onions

Recipe source: Adapted from a recipe by Tony Tan

This is one of northern China's best-known snacks. In Beijing, locals eat them at any time of the day or with a main meal. Traditionally made with lard or duck fat, the dish is nowadays more often made with vegetable oil. Restaurants tend to deep-fry the spring onion pancakes – but that never tastes as good as pan-fried pancakes. The pancakes may appear difficult to make on account of the hot-water method but it is no different than making choux pastry.

Notes: In this recipe, resting the dough relaxes the gluten in the dough and lessens its elasticity, making it easier to roll out and giving the finished pancakes the desired chewy, flaky texture.

Equipment:

- metric measuring scales, jug and spoons
- tea towels
- chopping board
- cook's knife
- sifter
- large mixing bowl
- wooden spoon
- heatproof jug
- rolling pin
- pastry brush
- frying pan or skillet
- spatula
- serving plate

Ingredients:

- 250 g plain flour, plus some extra for rolling out the dough
- ½ tsp salt
- 1 tbsp coconut oil
- 220 ml boiling water
- 3 tbsp sesame oil
- 3 spring onions, finely chopped
- ¼ cup sunflower oil, for pan-frying

Start with 200ml water and add more if needed

What to do:

1. Prepare all of the ingredients based on the instructions in the ingredients list.
2. Sift the flour and salt into a large mixing bowl and stir to combine.
3. ***Mix the coconut oil and boiling water together in the heatproof jug.**
4. ***Ask an adult to pour the hot-water-and-oil mixture into the combined flour and salt, and mix well.**
5. ***Ask an adult to tip the hot dough on a bench and knead for 5 minutes until smooth and elastic.**
6. Return the dough to the bowl and leave to rest for 20 minutes.

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7. Lightly flour a bench or work surface and shape the rested dough into a long roll with your hands.
8. Divide the length of dough into 20–24 equal portions.
9. Using a small rolling pin, roll out one piece of dough into a 12 cm circle.
10. Dip the pastry brush into a small bowl of sesame oil and brush the dough circle, stopping just before the rim of the circle.
11. Scatter 1 tablespoon of the sliced spring onion onto the oiled surface of the dough.
12. Lift the side of the dough circle nearest to you and roll the dough into a thin sausage, pinching the ends to seal. Flatten slightly, then roll up the dough again from one end to the other like a snail.
13. Repeat until all the remaining dough is used. Cover with a tea towel.
14. Rest for another 20 minutes.
15. Flatten a coil of dough and roll out into a 10 cm disc. Do not worry if the surface cracks as you roll. Dust lightly with flour if required.
16. Repeat with the remaining coils of dough.
17. Rest the pancake dough again for 10 minutes before cooking.
18. Heat a frying pan over medium heat and add 1 tbsp of oil.
19. Fry 2–3 pancakes at a time in the pan, 2–3 minutes on each side, until crisp and gold-spotted.
20. Serve hot.

***Adult supervision required.**

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