

BUSYCOOK



Healthy chicken rice

Make this hawker centre staple at home in the rice cooker

THIS recipe comes from a Hainanese, and as we all know, they make the best chicken rice. The lady I learned this recipe from is one of those rare creatures God made – an understanding mother, mother-in-law and grandmother with a soft heart. That she fed her family very well only made her more precious in their eyes.

Her version of chicken rice is very healthy. The rice is not fried in oil, as in other recipes I know, and the only oil used is in the sauces.

You need a large chicken for this dish, not your little poulets that are sold double-packed in the supermarkets.

The main ingredient in this dish is the chicken, and the quality of the bird you choose will

affect the taste of the entire meal. A smaller or younger chicken will not have the same intensity of taste as that of a larger or older bird.

An owner of a chicken farm told me that the flesh of chicken in Singapore is soft and tasteless because the birds are sold when they are still too young. Such specimens have not had the opportunity to develop some muscles. This is a shame, considering that chicken is our favourite meat.

So, get yourself a big chicken and try this recipe for home-made chicken rice. For the heart-healthy, trim off the fat from the neck pouches. I use the little flaps of chicken fat just inside the abdominal cavity to get the chicken oil to flavour the chopped spring onion and ginger sauce. Throw away the rest of the fat.

I hope you enjoy this, as it's really worth the effort. E-mail any questions you have to me.



by Pauline D Loh

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Goat cheese pizza with sun-dried tomatoes and garlic

MY yuppie set has just discovered goat cheese, a spreadable feta-like cheese that can also be grilled and served on salads. It's pretty hard to get unless you visit the gourmet supermarkets, so I was delighted to find it in Carrefour (see picture, above).

If you like goat cheese as well, try this pizza. Spread the bases of two small ready-made pizza bases with butter. Top with minced garlic, salt and freshly ground black pepper. Cut up the goat cheese discs and place on pizza bases. Halve fresh honey red or cherry tomatoes and place in between the goat cheese.

Finally, cut up strips of sun-dried tomatoes (\$3.90 per jar at Carrefour) and scatter. Put more freshly ground black pepper on top.

Bake in a hot oven at 180 deg C for 15 minutes or until the cheese turns golden and the garlic is fragrant. You can also pop these into the toaster oven for about 10 minutes.



Rice-cooker Chicken Rice

Ingredients: (serves 4-6)

- 1 large chicken (1.5kg to 2kg)
- 1 small bunch pandan leaves
- 1 large piece old ginger
- 10 cloves garlic
- 1 large bunch spring onions.

Method:

1. Clean and trim pandan leaves and spring onions into 10cm lengths. Peel ginger and cut into large pieces. Skin garlic, leave cloves whole.
2. Clean chicken. Wash well and remove head and feet. Trim off fat at the neck. **Remove the two pieces of fat inside the abdomen cavity. Set aside.** Rub chicken inside and out with salt.
3. Put spring onions, garlic and ginger inside the chicken. Stuff in half the pandan leaves.
4. Place chicken into the rice

- cooker and add four bowls of water. Cover lid and cook. Set timer to 30 minutes.
5. When timer rings or after 30 minutes is up, switch OFF rice-cooker and allow chicken to steam for additional 15 minutes. (Do NOT leave rice cooker on "warm" function).
6. Remove chicken, drain well, set aside and cut into serving pieces.
7. Drain the soup left in rice cooker. Add enough water to make up to four cups again. Wash two cups rice and add to water. Place rest of pandan leaves on top. Cook as usual.
8. When rice is cooked, serve with chicken, chilli sauce and spring onion and ginger garnish. (A timer is useful so you don't have to keep looking at the clock.)

The Sauces

Chilli sauce ingredients:

- 10 red chillis, 5 cloves garlic,
- 1 piece YOUNG ginger, salt

Method:

1. Put everything into a blender and whizz. Salt to taste.

Spring onion and ginger sauce ingredients:

- 1 big bunch spring onions (5cm from white bulb),
- young ginger, rendered chicken fat.

Method:

1. Place chicken fat (see main recipe) in non-stick pan and fry till oil renders. Keep aside 1 tablespoon.
2. Using the flat side of a cleaver, bash spring onion and ginger flat and chop. (No blender)
3. Add hot chicken oil and salt. Stir well to mix.

Buying Guide:

- Large chicken (\$8.50)
- Chilli (\$2.00)
- Spring onions (\$0.60)
- Garlic (\$1.00 per bag)
- Pandan leaves (\$0.50)
- Ginger (\$1.00)
- Total = \$13.60**

