

Yunnan Steam Pot Chicken



Yunnan (South of the Clouds) Province is the most southwest region of China bordering the countries of Vietnam, Laos, and Burma. Yunnan Province borders Guizhou Province and Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region to the east, Chongqing and Sichuan to the north, and Tibet Autonomous Region to the northwest. Yunnan encompasses 394,000 square kilometres (152,084 square miles) and has a population of more than 42 million people.

Steam-pot chicken is a local speciality of Yunnan and I have adapted this recipe for a thermal cooker. The steam pot that is normally used has a hollow tube fixed in the centre, up to the height of the pot. Food is put around the tube and the pot is placed on a stand surrounded by boiling water. Steam comes up from the small hole in the middle of the pot to heat the food. If cooking this recipe it would be ready in about three or four hours.

INGREDIENTS

- " 12 medium dried Chinese mushrooms, soaked in boiling water
- " 8 ounces (225 grams) ham
- " 1.5 kg chicken
- " 2 tbs of light soy sauce
- " ½tsp of white pepper
- " 6 thickish slices fresh ginger
- " 2 scallions, quartered and crushed
- " 2 tbs Shaohsing wine or medium-dry sherry
- " 3 pak choi

METHOD

1. Drain and squeeze out excess water from the mushrooms but leave damp. Reserve the soaking liquid.
2. Slice the ham into large pieces.
3. Chop the chicken through the bones into serving pieces. Do not use the back; save it for the stockpot.
4. ½ fill the inner pot with water and bring to the boil.
5. Carefully put the chicken pieces in the water and bring back to the boil.
6. Continue to boil for about 2 minutes, so that the scum rises.
7. Pour into a colander and rinse the chicken to get rid of any remaining scum.
8. Rinse out the inner pot and then layer it with the mushrooms, ham and chicken.
9. Add the soy sauce, pepper, ginger, scallions and wine or sherry.
10. Pour in the mushroom water and top up with chicken stock until everything is covered.
11. Bring to the boil then turn down the heat and simmer for 5 minutes with the lid on.
12. Turn off the heat and put the inner pot into the insulated outer container.
13. Shut the lid and leave it to thermal cook for a minimum of 2 hours.

- 14. To serve slice some pak choi and place it in a bowl.**
- 15. Put some chicken, ham and mushrooms on top of the pak choi.**
- 16. Pour over some stock until all the pak choi is covered.**
- 17. Serve with boiled rice in a separate bowl.**

NOTE: This recipe is supplied by Chef Dave Knowles from the UK and is described for a 4.5 litre inner saucepan so you will need to adjust quantities if you are using something else.

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