

AMY'S FAMILY BAO

"AMY WU AND THE PERFECT BAO" BY KAT ZHANG

Be sure to ask for help from a trusted grown-up when preparing this recipe.
Have fun!

INGREDIENTS

BAO DOUGH

1 packet active dry yeast (2 1/4 tsp)
1/2 C warm water
4 C all-purpose flour
2 tsp. baking powder
2 tsp. salt
1/4 C sugar
1 C low-fat milk
2 tbsp. vegetable oil



BAO FILLING

1/2 lb raw shrimp
1/2 lb raw ground pork
1 egg
2 tbsp. rice wine
1 tsp sesame oil
2 tbsp. soy sauce
2 tbsp. fish sauce
Pinch of pepper
1 tsp ginger powder
5 shiitake mushrooms, minced
3 cloves garlic, minced
2 tsp fresh ginger, minced
Salt to taste

BAO DOUGH INSTRUCTIONS

1. Add the yeast to the 1/2 cup of warm water along with a large pinch of the sugar, and mix until the yeast dissolves. The water should turn frothy in a few minutes.
2. In a large bowl, combine 3 1/2 cups of flour, baking powder, salt, and the rest of the sugar. Mix together.
3. Add the milk, oil, and yeast-water to the dry ingredients. Mix together until the wet and dry ingredients are incorporated, then knead 5-10 minutes until dough is soft and elastic. Slowly add the remaining 1/2 cup of flour as needed. When the dough has been sufficiently kneaded, a thumbprint pressed into the dough should slowly spring back.
4. Form the dough into a ball and place it back in the large bowl. Cover the bowl with plastic wrap and leave it in a warm place for 1 to 1.5 hours until the dough has doubled in size.
5. Gently punch down the dough and knead it for another 5 minutes. Place it back into the bowl, cover it with the plastic wrap, and leave it to rise for another hour.

BAO FILLING INSTRUCTIONS

1. Dice the shrimp into small pieces and add to the ground pork, egg, rice wine, sesame oil, soy sauce, fish sauce, pepper, and ginger powder in a large bowl.
 2. Add the minced shiitake mushrooms, garlic, and ginger to the bowl. Mix all ingredients to combine but do not overmix.
 3. A spoonful of the mixture can be cooked like a meatball in boiling water or fried in a pan to allow for tasting. If needed, add additional salt.
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BAO-MAKING INSTRUCTIONS

1. Cut 20 2-inch squares of parchment paper.
2. Shape the bao dough into a rough log, approximately 3 inches in diameter, and cut 20 pieces of equal size.
3. Take a piece of dough and flatten it into a rough circle by hand or with a rolling pin. The circle should be approximately 4 inches in diameter and thicker at the center than at the edges.
4. Place about a tablespoonful of bao filling into the center of the dough circle. It is better to start with smaller amounts of filling to make the pleating easier. Pleat the bao shut by pinching the edges of the dough circles until the top comes together like a drawstring purse. There are many videos online that show the pleating process.
5. Place each pleated bao on a square of parchment paper.
6. Pleated bao should sit for about 15 minutes before being steamed. Generally, it takes at least this long to pleat all the bao, so by the time you are finished pleating all 20, the first few will be ready to go in the steamer.
7. Steam the bao, with the parchment paper underneath, in a steamer for 10 minutes. Remove the steamer from the heat for 3-4 minutes before removing the lid, to keep the bao from deflating.
8. Eat!

