



THE DARING COOKS' DECEMBER, 2011 CHALLENGE: CHA SUI & CHA SUI BAO

Who knew tea was just as delicious in cooking as it was in your mug? :) Thank you SO MUCH Sarah! You turned so many of us on to a new method and ingredient in our cooking repertoires! Your tea challenge was not only really interesting but a whole lot of fun! You did a wonderful job in your research, your choice of sample recipe and in supporting the rest of us – really well done, thanks! :) Let's all visit Sarah's blog, [Simply Cooked](#) and give her some comment love, shall we? :D

Turning this right over to Sara – I can't wait to jump right into this challenge!

Hugs all!
Lis
xoxox

Hi guys, I am [Sara](#) from [Belly Rumbles](#), a little food blog from Sydney Australia. What an honour it is to be this month's host of the Daring Cooks' Challenge!

Sydney is a very multicultural city, and we are blessed with an amazing choice of cuisines and access to a wide range of ingredients and fresh produce. In our household we eat a lot of Asian cuisine. Yes Asian is a very wide term, and I generally cook Japanese, Chinese, Thai and Malaysian or my experimental versions based on one those.

My family and I regularly attend yum cha for brunch on a Sunday. Nothing beats a lazy start to the day and then grazing over a number of different steamed and fried dumplings as well as other various treats. Often we will choose a plate of cha sui (Cantonese BBQ pork) which is sliced and usually splashed with some soy sauce and can be scattered with peanuts. Steamed or baked cha sui bao (Cantonese BBQ pork buns) are also a regular item. My freezer always contains a six pack of frozen cha sui bao (not homemade) for steaming and a piece of cha sui is a regular purchase from the local Chinese BBQ shop.

Therefore what better way to challenge you guys and myself than having a go at making the Cantonese dish of char sui and then baking/steaming some cha sui bao.

Recipe Source: I looked at quite a few blogs and various websites as well as referring to various cook books. Through trial and error my recipes are a slight variation.

My recipe for marinade using maltose was based on [Blue Apocalypse's recipe](#).

My char sui bao filling variations was based on quite a few various sites I visited, one of those was [Chinatown Connection](#) which I used the dough recipe for the steamed buns.

Blog-checking lines: Our Daring Cooks' December 2012 hostess is Sara from Belly Rumbles! Sara chose awesome Char Sui Bao as our challenge, where we made the buns, Char Sui, and filling from scratch – delicious!

Posting Date: December 14, 2011

Notes: Rising time of the dough will vary, depending on temperature. Here in Australia it is warm and dough rises quite quickly. When I was playing around with the dough in colder months it took a couple of hours.

Maltose



Maltose is also known as malt sugar. It adds a lovely shine to the char sui. It can be found in Asian grocery stores. If you don't want to purchase Maltose you could substitute honey.

Shallots



When I refer to shallots I am referring to the French type which look like small brown onions.

Green Onions



These can also be known as spring onions, salad onions or green shallots.

Shaoxing Cooking Wine



Shaoxing is Chinese rice wine. If you cannot locate you can substitute sherry.

Flat/field & Swiss brown mushrooms



Flat/field mushrooms are the larger mushroom above. Swiss browns are the smaller ones. Basically they are like button mushrooms with a brown top not white. Please feel free to experiment with your favourite mushrooms.

Mandatory Items:

Prepare char sui and then make char sui bao.

Variations allowed:

If you don't eat pork please play around with alternative meats, eg chicken thigh or tofu to marinade. I have provided a vegetarian filling option using mushrooms for baked buns.

Preparation time:

Char sui, marinade - minimum 4 hours, best left overnight, cooking time 30 minutes.

Baked char sui bao - raising time 1 - 2 hours, bun construction 20 minutes, cooking time 15 minutes.

Steamed char sui bao - raising time of dough 1-2 hours, bun construction 20 minutes, additional raising 20 minutes (approx), cooking time 12 minutes.

Equipment required:

For the char sui

- Bowl for mixing marinade
- Ceramic or glass dish for the meat to marinade in
- Oven or BBQ

For the baked char sui bao

- Large bowl
- Baking tray
- Wok or fry pan

For the steamed char sui bao

- Large bowl
- Wok
- Bamboo steamers
- 20cm x 8cm (8" x 3") square pieces of baking paper

Char Sui (Cantonese BBQ Pork)

Ingredients

1 pork fillet/tenderloin (roughly 1-1.5 pounds)
4 large cloves of garlic, crushed
1 teaspoon (3 gm) ginger, grated
1 tablespoon peanut oil
1 ½ tablespoons maltose (you can substitute honey)
1 ½ tablespoons honey
2 tablespoons hoisin sauce
1 tablespoon light soy sauce
1 tablespoon dark soy sauce
1 teaspoon oyster sauce
1 tablespoon shaoxing cooking wine
½ teaspoon (2 gm) ground white pepper
pinch of salt
½ teaspoon (2 gm) five spice powder
½ teaspoon sesame oil
½ teaspoon pillar box red food colouring
(1 tablespoon=15 ml, 1 teaspoon=5 ml)



Directions:

1. Trim the pork loin to remove fat and tendon and slice lengthways so you have two long pieces, then cut in half. By cutting the pork in to smaller pieces to marinate you will end up with more flavoursome char sui. If you want to leave the pork in one piece you can do this as well. Place in container that you will be marinating them in.



2. Combine all the other ingredients in a bowl and mix well to combine. I placed my maltose in the microwave for a few seconds to make it easier to work with. Maltose is quite a solid hard sticky substance.



3. Cover pork well with $\frac{2}{3}$ of the marinade mixture. Marinate for a minimum of 4 hours, I find it is best left to marinate overnight. Place the reserved $\frac{1}{3}$ portion of the marinade covered in the fridge. You will use this as a baste when cooking the pork.



Cooking Method 1 - Oven

This is the first way that I experimented with cooking the char sui.

1. Pre-heat oven to moderate 180°C/350°F/gas mark 4.
2. Cover a baking tray with foil or baking paper. Place on top of this a rack on which to cook the pork.
3. Place pork on the rack and place in oven.
4. Bake for approximately 10 minutes, basting and turning.
5. Turn the heat up to moderately hot 200°C/400°F/gas mark 6 for the final 20 minutes as this will aid the charring. Cook until cooked through.



Cooking Method 2 - Seared in pan & then into the oven



On reading more I discovered this method, it was meant to give a better charred finish. Not sure that it did give a "better" result, but the pork was a lot more moist.

1. Pre-heat oven to moderate 180°C/350°F/gas mark 4.
2. Cover a baking tray with foil or baking paper. Place on top of this a rack on which to cook the pork.
3. Place pork in a hot frying pan or wok. Sear it quickly so it is well browned



4. Remove from pan/wok and place pork on the rack and place in oven.
5. Bake for approximately 15 minutes, basting and turning until cooked through.

Cooking Method 3 - BBQ



This method I feel gave the best result. If you have access to a BBQ use it. The pork had a better BBQ flavour and was also very moist.

1. Place marinated pork loin on the grill of your BBQ



2. Cook on a medium heat, approximately 15 minutes, until cooked through.
3. Be careful to watch that you don't burn the pork.

Char Sui (Cantonese BBQ Pork)

Alternative marinade without red food colouring or maltose

Ingredients

1 teaspoon (6 gm) salt
1 teaspoon sesame oil
1 tablespoon dark soy sauce
1 teaspoon (3 gm) ground white pepper
2 tablespoons honey
2 tablespoons (30 gm/1 oz) sugar
2 tablespoons oyster sauce
1 tablespoon shaoxing cooking wine
1 teaspoon (3 gm) five spice
(1 tablespoon=15 ml, 1 teaspoon=5 ml)

Directions:

1. Trim the pork loin to remove fat and tendon and slice lengthways so you have two long pieces, then cut in half. Place in container that you will be marinating them in.
2. Combine all the other ingredients in a bowl and mix well to combine.



3. Cover pork well with $\frac{2}{3}$ of the marinade mixture. Marinate for a minimum of 4 hours, I find it is best left to marinate overnight. Place the reserved $\frac{1}{3}$ portion of the marinade covered in the fridge. You will use this as a baste when cooking the pork.
4. Follow the desired cooking method from the previous recipe.

Baked Char Sui Bao (Cantonese BBQ Pork Bun)

Servings: 12

Filling Ingredients

350 gm (12 oz) char sui (finely diced)
2 green onions/spring onions (finely sliced)
1 tablespoon hoisin
1 tablespoon dark soy sauce
1 teaspoon sesame oil
¼ cup (60 ml) chicken stock
1 teaspoon (2 gm) cornflour
½ tablespoon vegetable oil
(1 tablespoon=15 ml, 1 teaspoon=5 ml)

Dough Ingredients

2½ teaspoons (8 gm/1 satchel) of dried yeast
¼ cup (55 gm/2 oz) sugar
½ cup warm water
2 cups (280 gm/10 oz) plain flour
1 egg (medium size - slightly beaten)
3 tablespoons oil
½ teaspoon (3 gm) salt
Egg wash: 1 egg beaten with a dash of water
(1 cup=240 ml, 1 tablespoon=15 ml, 1 teaspoon=5 ml)

Filling Directions:

1. Heat the vegetable oil in a wok or pan.
2. Add diced char sui to the wok/pan and stir then add spring onions, cook for 1 minute.
3. Add hoisin, dark soy sauce and sesame oil to the pork mixture, stir fry for one minute.
4. Mix cornflour and stock together and then add to the pork mixture.
5. Stir well and keep cooking until the mixture thickens, 1 or 2 minutes.
6. Remove mixture from wok/pan and place in a bowl to cool. Set aside until ready to use.

Bun Directions:

1. Place the sugar and warm water in a bowl, mix until the sugar has dissolved. Add yeast and leave it for 10 - 15 minutes until it becomes all frothy.
2. Sift flour in to a large bowl.



3. Add yeast mixture, egg, oil and salt and stir. Bring the flour mixture together with your hands.
4. Place dough on a lightly floured surface and knead for approximately 10 minutes. The dough should be smooth and slightly elastic.
5. Place in a lightly oiled bowl and cover with a damp cloth. Leave to rise until it is double in size. This will take from 1 - 2 hours depending on weather conditions.
6. Once dough has doubled in size knock back and divide in to 12 portions and shape in to round balls.
7. Use a rolling pin to roll out to approximately 5cm (2 inches) in diameter. Then pick the piece of dough up and gently pull the edges to enlarge to about 8cm (3 inches) in diameter.



By doing this it keeps the dough slightly thicker in the centre. This means when your buns are cooking they won't split on the tops.



8. Place a good sized tablespoon of filling on the dough circle. Then gather the edges and seal your bun.



9. Place the bun seal side down on your baking tray. Continue with rest of dough.

10. Once all buns are complete brush surface with egg wash.



11. Place in a preheated oven of 200° C/392° F for 15 minutes or until golden brown.



Steamed Char Sui Bao (Cantonese BBQ Pork Bun)

Servings: 20

Filling Ingredients

350 gm (12 oz) char sui (finely diced)
2 shallots (finely diced)
1 tablespoon dark soy sauce
2 tablespoons oyster sauce
1 teaspoon sesame oil
¼ cup (60 ml) chicken stock
1 teaspoon (3 gm) cornflour
½ tablespoon vegetable oil

Bun Ingredients

1 cup milk, scalded
¼ cup (60 gm/2 oz) sugar
1 tablespoon oil
¼ teaspoon (2 gm) salt
2½ teaspoons (8 gm/1 satchel) of dried yeast
3 cups (420 gm/15 oz) plain flour
(1 cup=240 ml, 1 tablespoon=15 ml, 1 teaspoon=5 ml)



Filling Directions:

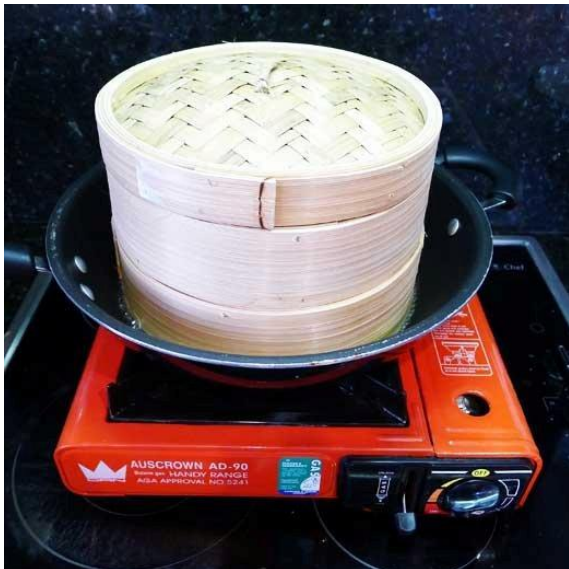
1. Heat the vegetable oil in a wok or pan. Sauté the shallots for one or two minutes until soft.
2. Add diced char sui to the wok/pan and stir.
3. Add oyster sauce, dark soy sauce and sesame oil to the pork mixture, stir fry for one minute.
4. Mix cornflour and stock together and then add to the pork mixture.
5. Stir well and keep cooking until the mixture thickens, 1 or 2 minutes.
6. Remove mixture from wok/pan and place in a bowl to cool. Set aside until ready to use.

Bun Directions:

1. Scald milk and then stir in sugar, oil and salt, leave to cool until it is lukewarm. Once it is the right temperature add yeast, leave until yeast is activated and it becomes frothy, about 10 - 15 minutes.
2. Sift flour in to a large bowl.
3. Add milk/yeast mixture to the flour. Bring the flour mixture together with your hands.
4. Place dough on a lightly floured surface and knead for approximately 10 minutes. The dough should be smooth and slightly elastic.
5. Place in a lightly oiled bowl and cover with a damp cloth. Leave to rise until it is double in size. This will take from 1 - 2 hours depending on weather conditions.
6. Punch down dough and divide in to 20 equal portions.
7. Roll each dough portion in to a 7 - 8cm (2¾ - 3 ¼ inches) round.
8. Place 1 tablespoon of filling in the centre of the round, gather the edges together at the top and place on a 8cm (3 inch) square of baking paper. Repeat until all dough has been used.
9. Cover and let rise for 20 minutes.



10. Place buns in bamboo steamer, leaving space between the buns.
11. Heat water in a wok until it is simmering and place steamers one on top of each other in the wok.



12. Place lid on top bamboo steamer and steam for approximately 12 minutes.

Mushroom Filling for Baked Buns

Ingredients

2 cups (170 gm/6 oz) Swiss brown mushrooms (finely diced)
(alternatively button, Roman brown, Italian brown, Crimini)
1 cup (90 gm/3 oz) Shitake mushrooms (finely diced)
2½ cups (225 gm/8 oz) flat/field mushrooms (finely diced)
(alternatively Portabella mushrooms)
2 shallots (finely diced)
1 tablespoon dark soy sauce
2 tablespoons oyster sauce
1 tablespoon hoisin
1 teaspoon sesame oil
¼ cup vegetable stock
1 teaspoon (3 gm) cornflour
½ tablespoon vegetable oil
(1 cup=240 ml, 1 tablespoon=15 ml, 1 teaspoon=5 ml)



Directions:

1. Heat the vegetable oil in a wok or pan. Sauté the shallots for one or two minutes until soft
2. Add the mushrooms to the onions in the wok/pan. Cook until mushrooms have rendered down and most of the liquid from the mushrooms has evaporated.
3. Add soy sauce, oyster sauce, hoisin and sesame oil, cook for another few minutes.
4. Mix cornflour and stock together and then add to the mushroom mixture.
5. Stir well and keep cooking until the mixture thickens, 1 or 2 minutes.
6. Remove mixture from wok/pan and place in a bowl to cool. Set aside until ready to use.

Storage & Freezing Instructions/Tips:

The baked char sui bao freezes very well. All you need to do is take them out of the freezer and place in the oven to warm. The steamed ones should freeze okay as well. To warm them place in microwave for about 30 seconds until warm and defrosted.

Additional Information:

This is a demonstration of folding the [steamed char sui bao](#)

Disclaimer:

*The Daring Kitchen and its members in no way suggest we are medical professionals and therefore are NOT responsible for any error in reporting of "alternate baking/cooking". If you have issues with digesting gluten, then it is YOUR responsibility to research the ingredient before using it. If you have allergies, it is YOUR responsibility to make sure any ingredient in a recipe will not adversely affect you. If you are lactose intolerant, it is YOUR responsibility to make sure any ingredient in a recipe will not adversely affect you. If you are vegetarian or vegan, it is YOUR responsibility to make sure any ingredient in a recipe will not adversely affect you. **The responsibility is YOURS regardless of what health issue you're dealing with.** Please consult your physician with any questions before using an ingredient you are not familiar with. Thank you! :)*