



— Chiao-tzu/Jiaozi Dumplings —

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When I was a kid my family loved Thanksgiving, but none of us were particularly fond of turkey. Instead we would eat heaping piles of dumplings. Bowl after bowl of them. We still do the same, with even the youngest ones helping to assemble the 100+ dumplings necessary to make sure everyone has eaten their fill. You can pinch the dumpling shut in the usual way, but our kids like to get creative and come up with all sorts of weird shapes. If you run out of dumpling skins, the leftover filling makes for delicious meatballs.

INGREDIENTS

2 lbs. ground meat (half pork, half beef, but it's best with all pork)
 1 cup of finely chopped water chestnut
 1/2 tablespoon sugar
 3 tablespoons soy sauce (or more)
 3 tablespoons dark sesame oil
 2 tablespoons finely chopped/shredded ginger
 2 tablespoons finely chopped fresh garlic
 2 tablespoons or more finely chopped green onions (more if scallions)
 3 tablespoons of corn starch (dissolved in 1/4 cup of cold water)
 Rice vinegar for dipping sauce
 Water, or mix of water and chicken broth, for steaming
 2-3 packs of chiao-tzu dumpling wrapper/skins (not wonton wrappers). They may be yellow, or white, but they should be thicker than wonton skins.

EQUIPMENT

Skillet, cookie sheet

YIELDS

About 100 dumplings

STEP-BY-STEP RECIPE

- 1** | Mix the filling ingredients by hand (literally with your hands — it works best). Fill each chiao-tzu dumpling wrapper with just as much filling as will fit — it's less than you think. Seal the wrappers by dipping your finger in water and running it along the whole dumpling wrapper.
- 2** | To keep the dumplings from drying out before you cook them, place them on a cookie sheet or plate (fat side of the dumpling down, so it stands up straight — this is important) and cover with a clean, damp dish cloth or a few slightly damp paper towels.
- 3** | **TO COOK:**
 In a 10- or 12-inch skillet over medium heat, add a tablespoon of oil. When hot, set dumplings, about 20 at a time if you can fit them, in the skillet. Place them with the fat side of dumpling down, flat.
- 4** | Cook **UNCOVERED** on medium heat for 5-7 minutes, until the bottoms get deep golden brown. Then pour about 1/2 cup of water (or mix of water and broth) into the skillet and **COVER** immediately with a tight lid. Cook for another 10 minutes.
- 5** | Keep the dumplings hot on a cookie sheet in a 200° oven covered gently with tin foil until all the dumplings are done.
- 6** | **DUMPLING SAUCE:**
 Combine 1 part soy sauce, 1 part rice vinegar, a splash of sesame oil, some finely chopped garlic, a little chopped green onion, a dash of sugar and a dash of red pepper flakes. Let it sit a bit.

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