

# KUNG PAO CHICKEN

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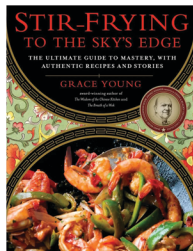
SERVES 2-4

## INGREDIENTS

- 1 pound boneless, skinless chicken thigh or breast, cut into 3/4-inch cubes
- 2 tablespoons minced ginger
- 1 tablespoon minced garlic
- 2 1/2 teaspoons cornstarch
- 1 teaspoon soy sauce
- 1 teaspoon plus 1 tablespoon Shao Hsing rice wine or dry sherry
- 2 teaspoons sugar
- 3/4 teaspoon salt
- 2 tablespoons chicken broth
- 1 tablespoon Chinkiang or balsamic vinegar
- 1 teaspoon dark soy sauce
- 1 teaspoon sesame oil
- 2 tablespoons peanut or vegetable oil
- 4 to 8 dried red chili peppers, snipped on one end
- 1/2 teaspoon roasted and ground Sichuan peppercorns
- 1 large red bell pepper, cut into 1-inch squares
- 3/4 cup unsalted roasted peanuts
- 1/2 cup minced scallions

## INSTRUCTIONS

1. In a medium bowl combine the chicken, ginger, garlic, cornstarch, soy sauce, 1 teaspoon of the rice wine, 1 teaspoon of the sugar, 1/2 teaspoon of the salt, and 1 teaspoon cold water. Stir to combine. In a small bowl combine the broth, vinegar, dark soy sauce, sesame oil, and the remaining 1 tablespoon rice wine.
2. Heat a 14-inch flat-bottomed wok or 12-inch skillet over high heat until a bead of water vaporizes within 1 to 2 seconds of contact. Swirl in 1 tablespoon of the peanut oil, add the chilies and ground Sichuan peppercorns, then, using a metal spatula, stir-fry 15 seconds or until the chilies just begin to smoke. Push the chili mixture to the sides of the wok, carefully add the chicken, and spread it evenly in one layer in the wok. Cook undisturbed 1 minute, letting the chicken begin to sear. Then stir-fry 1 minute or until the chicken is lightly browned but not cooked through.
3. Swirl the remaining 1 tablespoon peanut oil into the wok. Add the bell peppers and stir-fry 1 minute or until the peppers begin to soften. Swirl the broth mixture into the wok and stir-fry 1 minute or until the chicken is just cooked through. Add the peanuts and scallions, sprinkle on the remaining 1 teaspoon sugar and 1/4 teaspoon salt, and stir-fry 30 seconds or until the scallions are bright green.



*"The Great Gongbao, here? he thought in astonishment. "To see me?" He looked around his kitchen in a panic. "I must prepare an exceptional meal for him!" But his food supplies were humble and he was at a loss. The most he had was one piece of chicken breast. "I will have to make do," he told himself...*

Read the whole story of Kung Pao Chicken in *Chinese Menu: The History, Myths, and Legends Behind Your Favorite Foods*