

Chinese Dumplings/Potstickers

<http://userealbutter.com/2007/10/04/chinese-dumplings-and-potstickers-recipe/>

pork filling

1 lb ground pork
4 large napa cabbage leaves, minced
3 stalks green onions, minced
7 shitake mushrooms, minced (if dried – rehydrated and rinsed carefully)
1/2 cup bamboo shoots, minced
1/4 cup ginger root, minced
3 tbsp soy sauce
2 tbsp sesame oil
2 tbsp corn starch

OR

shrimp filling

1/2 lb raw shrimp, peeled, deveined, and coarsely chopped
1/2 lb ground pork
3 stalks green onions, minced
1/4 cup ginger root, minced
1 cup water chestnuts, minced
1 tsp salt
3 tbsp sesame oil
2 tbsp corn starch

dough

Note: you will want to double this for the amount of filling listed – I just tend to use leftover pork filling for soup meatballs. A single batch will yield about 40 dumplings depending on size.

2 cups all-purpose flour
1/2 cup warm water
flour for worksurface

dipping sauce

2 parts soy sauce
1 part vinegar (red wine or black)
a few drops of sesame oil
chili garlic paste (optional)
minced ginger (optional)
minced garlic (optional)
minced green onion (optional)
sugar (optional)

Combine all filling ingredients in a large mixing bowl and mix thoroughly (I mix by clean hand). Cover and refrigerate until ready to use.

Make the dough, Method 1: Place the flour in the work bowl of a food processor with the dough blade. Run the processor and pour the warm water in until incorporated. Pour the contents into a sturdy bowl or onto a work surface and knead until uniform and smooth. The dough should be firm and silky to the touch and not sticky.[Note: it's better to have a moist dough and have to incorporate more flour than to have a dry and pilling dough and have to incorporate more water).

Make the dough, Method 2 (my mom's instructions): In a large bowl mix flour with 1/4 cup of water and stir until water is absorbed. Continue adding water one teaspoon at a time and mixing thoroughly until dough pulls away from sides of bowl. We want a firm dough that is barely sticky to the touch.

Both dough methods: Knead the dough about twenty strokes then cover with a damp towel for 15 minutes. Take the dough and form a flattened dome. Cut into strips about 1 1/2 to 2 inches wide. Shape the strips into rounded long cylinders. On a floured surface, cut the strips into 3/4 inch pieces. Press palm down on each piece to form a flat circle (you can shape the corners in with your fingers). With a rolling pin, roll out a circular wrapper from each flat disc. Take care not to roll out too thin or the dumplings will break during cooking. Leave the centers slightly thicker than the edges. Place a tablespoon of filling in the center of each wrapper and fold the dough in half, pleating the edges along one side (see images above).

To boil: Bring a large pot of water to a boil and add dumplings to pot. Boil the dumplings until they float.

To steam: Place dumplings on a single layer of napa cabbage leaves or on a well-greased surface and steam for about 6 minutes.

To pan fry (potstickers): Place dumplings in a frying pan with 2-3 tbsp of vegetable oil. Heat on high and fry for a few minutes until bottoms are golden. Add 1/2 cup water and cover. Cook until the water has boiled away and then uncover and reduce heat to medium or medium low. Let the dumplings cook for another 2 minutes then remove from heat and serve.

To freeze: Assemble dumplings on a baking sheet so they are not touching. Freeze for 20-30 minutes until dumplings are no longer soft. Place in ziploc bag and freeze for up to a couple of months. Prepare per the above instructions, but allow extra time to ensure the filling is thoroughly cooked.

To serve: Serve dumplings or potstickers hot with your choice of dipping sauce combinations.