



Crab, Pork, and Napa Cabbage Dumplings

Featured on June 30th, 2017, for the program “The Chinese Kitchen Garden”

Recipe courtesy of program guest Wendy Kiang-Spray

*How do three generations of a family’s Chinese gardening traditions take root in America? We welcomed guest Wendy Kiang-Spray, author of *The Chinese Kitchen Garden*, whose parents and grandparents grew food in their own traditional Chinese kitchen gardens in Shandong and Hong Kong, using techniques that Wendy incorporated into her own Maryland garden. As we prepared dishes from Wendy’s book, we explored the many ways Chinese vegetables, herbs, and spices have held significance and symbolic meaning, and how the process of planting food for one’s family is key to preserving a sense of home and tradition wherever you live.*

From Wendy: *My father makes dumplings throughout the year, usually taking requests for the different filling combinations, both traditional and of his own creation. I am finally revealing a family secret with the recording of my father’s crab, pork, and Napa cabbage dumpling recipe. Because Napa cabbage is so mild in taste, its presence is barely noticeable, but the high water content of the cabbage contributes to the juiciness of these dumplings. You can purchase dumpling wrappers in Asian supermarkets.*

Crab, Pork, and Napa Cabbage Dumplings

Makes at least 24 dumplings

*Recipe and headnote from *The Chinese Kitchen Garden: Growing techniques and family recipes from a classic cuisine* by Wendy Kiang-Spray. Copyright © 2017 by Wendy Kiang-Spray. Reprinted with permission from Timber Press. Pages 180-181.*

Ingredients

1/3 cup finely chopped cilantro
 1 pound Napa cabbage, chopped fine with excess water drained and squeezed out
 3 spring onions, chopped very fine
 1 inch ginger, minced
 ¼ pound crabmeat, picked through and chopped
 1 pound ground pork, finely minced
 1 tablespoon Shaoxing rice wine or brandy
 ¼ cup soy sauce
 2 tablespoons corn or vegetable oil
 ¼ cup dark (toasted) sesame oil
 2 teaspoons sweet bean sauce
 Pinch of sugar
 Pinch of salt
 Pinch of white pepper
 1 (30-count or more) package of round white dumpling wrappers
 Soy sauce or black vinegar for serving

Directions

1. Combine the cilantro, Napa cabbage, spring onions, ginger, crabmeat, ground pork, rice wine, soy sauce, corn oil, sesame oil, sweet bean sauce, sugar, salt, white pepper, and ½ cup of water in a large bowl. Stir vigorously for several minutes—this laborious step is the key to creating a filling with a light texture.

2. With a dumpling wrapper in the palm of a hand, place about a tablespoon of filling in the center of the wrapper. Bring the sides together, pleating as necessary and forming a little purse. Gently cup the filled center in your hands so it does not get crushed and squeeze the edges together tightly with both hands. Continue to fill all dumpling wrappers.
3. Fill a wok or deep pan with water to 2 inches below the top. Heat water to a rolling boil. Working in batches so the wok is not too crowded, drop dumplings in and continuously and gently stir until they float to the top. At this point, add $\frac{1}{2}$ -1 cup of cold water to bring the boil down. When water comes back up to a boil, add another $\frac{1}{2}$ -1 cup of cold water. This process allows dumplings to cook gently without breaking. When the water comes back up to a boil again, dumplings should be another minute or so away from being ready.
4. Test for doneness by pressing into the dumpling. The filling inside should feel firm and be very juicy but cooked through and hot. Serve with a little soy sauce or black vinegar.



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