



Chilled Noodles with Spicy Peanut Sauce

Dairy-free. Easy Gluten-Free substitution. Omit chicken to serve as side dish or for meatless / vegan version.

Recipe serves 4.

INGREDIENTS

For the Spicy Peanut Sauce:

1/3 C peanut butter (substitute tahini for peanut-free)

2 tbsp light soy sauce (or tamari for gluten-free)

1 tbsp sesame oil

1 tbsp Chinese black vinegar (see recipe note 1)

1 tbsp pure maple syrup

1-2 garlic clove, finely minced or grated

5-6 tbsp water to thin to desired consistency (depending on thickness of peanut butter)

Kosher salt, to taste

Chinese chili oil, to taste (we use either XO chili sauce or Chiu Chow chili oil)

For the Chilled Noodles:

½ lb sugar snap peas or snow peas

350g of Asian-style stick noodles, cooked to 'al dente' (see note 2)

Drizzle of sesame oil, to toss the cooked noodles

2 medium carrots, cut into approx. 3" pieces first, then julienned

1 sweet bell pepper, trimmed and julienned



½ English cucumber, cut into approx. 3" pieces first, then julienned

4 skin-on, bone-on chicken thighs (see notes 3 and 4) OR egg ribbons (see note 5)

For serving:

1 scallion, sliced

Sesame seeds

METHOD

[NOTE: If you want to do everything in ONE POT for fewer dirty dishes to wash (my modus operandi in life), follow my directions as written and poach the chicken at the end, after blanching the veggies and cooking the noodles, in the SAME POT OF WATER. Alternatively, if you need to make this meal fastest way possible, set out a second large pot of water to poach the chicken concurrently because it does take about 30 minutes to poach.]

Put a large pot of water on the stove and bring to a boil. Set out a large bowl filled with water next to the stove (to which you will add ice later for an ice bath). Set a colander over a flat bowl. We are using these, in turn, for the snow peas, julienned carrots, julienned bell pepper and soba noodles.

Make Spicy Peanut Sauce. While waiting for the water to boil, whisk all sauce ingredients together. Use enough water to achieve a consistency that is thick but pourable. Taste and season with kosher salt as needed – amount depends on saltiness of peanut butter, and whether you used tamari or light soy sauce (former is typically saltier than the latter). It should taste salty, since it will be used to coat noodles. Finally, add in a good dollop of Chinese chili oil for that delicious heat. We love XO chili sauce or Chiu Chow chili oil. If you made it ahead and it's a bit thick upon taking it out of the fridge, add a splash of boiling water and whisk until loose again.

Blanch veggies. When you're ready to blanch the veggies, add a bunch of ice cubes into the large bowl of water. Once the pot of water comes to a boil, add a generous amount of salt (as if salting for pasta) and add snow peas. Blanch 3-4 minutes until tender but still retaining crispiness. Do not dump out the water:



use tongs or a handle mesh strainer to transfer snow peas into the ice bath. Once cool, transfer into colander to drain.

Next, add julienned carrots into the pot of water. Blanch for 30-45 seconds, or until pliable and tender but not soft. Transfer to ice bath. By now you can transfer the drained snow peas to a cutting board, to be julienned (cut lengthwise 2-4 times depending on size). It is carrot's turn in the colander to drain. Quickly blanch the sweet bell peppers, until pliable and tender but not soft.

Cook noodles. Bring the water back up to a rolling boil and cook the noodles according to package directions. Drain noodles into colander (yes you can dump out the water this time), rinse noodles under cold running water and drain well. Place in serving bowl and toss with a good drizzle of sesame oil to minimize sticking. For proper *chilled* noodles (as the recipe is entitled), place the noodles in the fridge while you proceed to the next step of poaching chicken. My dad insists on this step. However, if your chicken is already cooked and you are ready to dig in, skip chilling the noodles – they will be fairly cold regardless since they were rinsed in cold water.

Poach chicken. Fill the same pot (no need to wash) with fresh tap water and add chicken thighs. Cover and bring to rolling boil. Lower heat to a gentle simmer (small bubbles) and cook for 5 minutes. After 5 minutes, remove the pot from heat completely **WITHOUT REMOVING THE LID**. Allow it to stand covered for 25-30 minutes, give or take because it depends on the size of the chicken. To test doneness, there should be no blood when pierced with a skewer or sharp knife in the thickest part. A meat thermometer should read 165f. Drain chicken thighs, rinse briefly to rid any clinging scum then set aside to cool. Once cool to touch, discard skin and pull meat off the bones with fingers and shred. Keep the bones for homemade bone broth ;)

Serve. Give noodles a final toss to loosen. Add drizzles more sesame oil if needed. Serve with shredded chicken, prepared vegetables, sliced scallions and sesame seeds. Toss everything with the spicy peanut sauce, or allow everyone to drizzle their own sauce. Enjoy!



Recipe Notes - Chilled Noodles with Spicy Peanut Sauce:

- 1. What is Chinese Black Vinegar?** AKA Chinkiang Black Vinegar, it is an inky-black vinegar with a beautiful complex, deep and woody flavour that adds so much dimension. You may have had it with soup dumplings (xiao long bao) which are always served with a little dish of it with sliced ginger for dipping. You'll need to source out Chinese black vinegar at Chinese supermarkets or online. There is no perfect substitution for Chinese vinegar so I do hope you can get your hands on it. The flavour and dimension it adds is so good. In my family, we would consider it blasphemous to omit it from the sauce! That said, if you can't find it, I suggest using rice vinegar for the tang factor in the peanut sauce which will also be very delicious.
- 2. What kind of noodles should I use?** In the blog post photos, I used Japanese soba noodles made from a combination of buckwheat *and* wheat flours. I also frequently make this with Chinese wheat flour 'stick' noodles, the kind that comes dry in bundles, are stick straight, flat and about 2mm thick. If you wish to make this gluten-free, use 100% dry buckwheat noodles or some type of rice stick noodles you enjoy. Tip: Look for noodles that have an al dente mouthfeel and do not overcook them. This recipe is best when the noodles have a bouncy texture!
- 3. Chicken:** I poach the chicken in the same pot of water to blanch the veggies. Alternatively, you can roast the chicken i.e. 400f oven, 35-45min skin on / bone-in chicken thighs. Leftover rotisserie chicken would be perfect as well – aim for about 2 cups of shredded meat, or just whatever you have leftover!
- 4. Meatless Version:** This dish is amazing as a side dish! In that case, I omit the shredded chicken.
- 5. How do I make Egg Ribbons as an alternate protein?** Heat non-stick pan over low to medium-low heat. Whisk eggs with 1 tsp sesame oil, 1 tbsp water and salt to taste. Once pan is heated, cook eggs in batches for thin crepes i.e. I use a 10" pan and make them in 3 batches. Add a drizzle of oil and enough egg mixture to thinly coat the pan, swirling to spread evenly if it doesn't do so on its own. Cook about 1 minute or just enough to be able to flip over. Flip and cook other side 30 seconds. Lift egg crepe gently from pan with a spatula onto a cutting board to cool. Continue with the remaining egg mixture. Once all egg crepes are done, slice into thin strips and add as noodle topping.