



SHANGHAI SPRING ROLLS

Makes 18-20 medium-sized spring rolls.

INGREDIENTS

1 x 20-package spring roll wrappers approximately 8" x 8" square, defrosted – see note 1

For the marinated pork:

½ lb pork tenderloin or shoulder (or boneless skinless chicken thighs if you don't eat pork)

1 tbsp light soy sauce

1 tsp roasted sesame oil

½ tsp salt, more or less to taste

2-3 dashes white pepper powder

For the filling:

8-10 large shiitake mushrooms, fresh or rehydrated

1½ lb napa cabbage (about 12 cups shredded)

2 thin slices of ginger ~ 1/8" each (unpeeled is fine)

Avocado oil or other high heat neutral oil for sautéing (2 tbsp) + shallow frying (~2 cups)

Kosher salt to taste

Optional for dipping - Worcestershire sauce or Chinese black vinegar

METHOD

Prep and marinate pork: Cut the pork into strips. Depending on how bulky your piece of meat is, you may have to cut it down into thinner logs first before beginning - do this lengthwise along the natural



grain of the muscle if you can. Ultimately, we want thin meat strips about $\frac{1}{4}$ " by $1\frac{1}{2}$ ". Mix with marinade ingredients and set aside to marinate.

Prepare shiitakes and napa cabbage: Remove stem and slice shiitake mushrooms thinly about $\frac{1}{8}$ ". Trim and slice napa cabbage thinly about $\frac{1}{8}$ " on the firmer white parts and $\frac{1}{4}$ " on the leafy green parts.

Brown meat and shiitakes: Heat a large wok or pot over medium-high heat. Once heated through, add 1 tbsp of oil. Add shredded pork and sauté until just cooked through. Add shiitakes and sauté a couple minutes more. Scoop out into a bowl and set aside.

Cook napa cabbage and finish the filling: To the wok, add another 1 tbsp of oil and ginger slices. Move ginger around 10 seconds to bloom the flavour, then add sliced napa cabbage, along with a good pinch of salt to taste. It will seem like a lot of cabbage but they cook down a lot. Sauté on medium-high heat for 5 minutes or until wilted and water is cooking out of them. Allow it to cook on a strong simmer to evaporate some of the liquid, tossing occasionally. Reduce heat to medium and add back pork and shiitake mixture. Continue to sauté everything a minute more until cabbage white parts are tender all the way through. Taste one more time and season with salt, soy sauce or sesame oil as needed. Scoop out and allow to cool fully, discarding the ginger slices. Pour off most of the liquid that didn't evaporate during cooking. Napa cabbage is very watery and for spring rolls, you need a fairly dry filling to avoid sogginess.

Wrap spring rolls: The wrapping method for spring rolls is similar to a burrito, except with much less filling. Start by placing one wrapper in front of you, positioned like a diamond with bottom corner pointing at you. Place $\frac{1}{4}$ cup of filling (loose, not packed) about $\frac{1}{4}$ of the way up from bottom corner. My family likes this ratio of filling-to-crunchy exterior but feel free to add a little bit more if you prefer your spring rolls bulkier. Spread filling across about 4" wide. Bring wrapper bottom corner up and over the filling, tucking around as needed. Roll upwards once. Bring the side corners in snugly next to the filling. Rolling upwards the remainder of the way until only a small corner of the wrapper remains. Dab a bit of water with your finger and wet the corner. Roll up and seal. Place spring roll seal-side down on a plate.



Repeat with remaining ingredients. Depending how much filling was placed in each spring roll, it should make 18-20.

Shallow-fry: The exact amount of oil will depend on the cooking vessel you're using but aim to fill it with enough oil so it comes just above halfway up the sides of a spring roll or ~3/4" at the deepest. This happens to be 2 cups of oil in my wok. Once oil is heated to 350f-375f (shimmering on the surface or bubbles rise rapidly up the sides of a dry wooden chopstick inserted into the oil), shallow fry spring rolls in batches of 3 or 4. Overcrowding drops the oil temperature down too much. Fry one side 2-3 minutes or until golden brown, flip and fry another 2-3 minutes or until golden brown. Drain on paper towels. Set on wire rack so bottoms don't get soggy while continuing with the rest. Tip: It's important to adjust your heat to maintain the oil at or around the same temperature throughout. If your oil is getting too hot (i.e. smoking), add some oil to cool it down quickly. If desired, you can keep them warm in a 200f oven. Serve as is, or with a dipping sauce such as Worcestershire sauce or Chinese black vinegar. Enjoy!

RECIPE NOTES – SHANGHAI SPRING ROLLS:

- 1. What are "Spring Roll" wrappers?** — Chinese spring roll wrappers are usually sold from the freezer section and come in a few sizes. I use 8.5" x 8.5" squares in this recipe but you can use different sizes, adjusting the amount of filling accordingly. The two brands I use are Spring Home (pictured above) and Doll brand. These are wheat-based wrappers and not to be confused with Vietnamese or Thai rice paper wrappers!
- 2. Make in advance:** The filling can be made a day or two in advance. Since the filling has to cool anyway, I do this often and then it's quick work to roll and fry them right before eating.
- 3. Freezing spring rolls:** once wrapped (before frying), place spring rolls on a parchment lined baking sheet, not touching, and freeze for 2 hrs or until firmly frozen. Transfer into a freezer safe container or bag. To cook, shallow fry from frozen until filling is heated through (the filling is already cooked).