

Deep-fried Salty Squid Recipe (Southern Chinese Style)

Ingredients: Serves 4

600 g small whole squid
¼ cup cornflour (cornstarch)
vegetable oil for deep-frying
1½ tablespoons finely sliced coriander (cilantro) stalks and roots
2 tablespoons finely sliced scallions
1 tablespoon finely diced ginger
1 tablespoon finely diced large red chilies, deseeded
1 tablespoon finely diced garlic
½ teaspoon sea salt
1 teaspoon Sichuan pepper and salt
2 iceberg lettuce leaves, washed, drained and very finely sliced
2 lemons, cut in wedges to serve

Method:

Clean the squid by gently pulling head and tentacles away from the body. Pull out the clear backbone (quill) from inside the body and discard entrails. Cut tentacles from the head just below the eyes; discard head. Remove side wings and fine membrane from the body. Rinse the body, tentacles and wings thoroughly and pat dry with kitchen paper. Cut the squid down the center so that it will open out flat, and slice the body and wings into 5 mm wide strips. In a bowl, combine squid, including tentacles, with cornflour and toss to coat, shaking off any excess. Heat oil in a hot wok until the surface seems to shimmer slightly. Add half the squid and deep-fry for about 1 minute, or until just tender and beginning to color. Remove with a slotted spoon and drain well on kitchen paper. Repeat this process with remaining squid. Pour off all but 1 tablespoon of oil from wok. Heat this until almost smoking, then add coriander, scallions, ginger, chili and garlic and stir-fry for 1 minute, or until fragrant. Return squid to wok with sea salt and half the Sichuan pepper and salt and stir-fry for a further 30 seconds. To serve, place lettuce in a bowl, with lemon wedges on the side. Top with squid, sprinkle with remaining Sichuan pepper and salt to taste and serve immediately.