

Soy-Braised Chicken Recipe

(See Yow Kai)

Ingredients:

3 tablespoons vegetable oil
3 tablespoons sugar
1 whole chicken, about 1.5 kg, excess fat removed
5 tablespoons thick dark soy sauce
large walnut-sized knob galangal, bruised
¾ teaspoon five-spice powder
1 teaspoon salt
sliced cucumber and slivered scallions, to serve
3 tablespoons sesame oil

Method:

Heat oil and sugar together in a wok over medium heat, stirring frequently. Watch it like a hawk; when sugar has melted and caramelized into little brown globules, add chicken and roll over several times to coat. Add water, soy sauce, galangal, five-spice powder, and salt and bring to a boil. Reduce heat to low and simmer gently, covered, for 45 to 50 minutes, turning chicken once, or until chicken is tender but not falling apart. Let chicken sit in hot liquid, covered, for 10 minutes.

Gently lift out chicken and transfer to chopping board. Carve into small pieces. Pull stray bits of meat off bones and heap into a mound on a serving platter, then surround with pieces. Garnish plate with cucumber and scallions.

Add sesame oil to sauce and reduce over high heat until slightly thickened, 6 to 8 minutes. Drizzle a little sauce over chicken and serve extra on the side.

Note: You can also braise a duck in the same way; use 2½ liters water and simmer duck for 2 hours.

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