HAPPY CHINESE NEW YEAR, EVERYONE!  
  
Growing up, I had some Chinese friends who would invite me over for Chinese New Year’s dumpling making. I will never forget the experience. Every New Year, they would make large batches of dough and large batches of filling (hopefully pork and chive, my favorite). I remember seeing a steamy, warm dough ball sitting in a bowl covered with plastic wrap and mountains of chopped chives on a cutting board. The dough rests so the wrappers are nice and stretchy for pleating. While the dough rests, the filling can be made. When all the components are ready, one person is on wrapper-rolling duty and everyone else sits around a table together chatting, making dumplings and hopefully wrapping dumplings fast enough so everyone can eat while working. My hand always went up during this so-called “taste-testing." Hehe.  
  
Dumplings are eaten during Chinese New Year because the dumplings themselves look like money pouches and are said to represent fortune and prosperity in the coming year. On top of that, it is a great way for the family to spend time together. What makes dumplings special is that they are mixed by hand for some time to ensure the fat in the meat really entraps all the juices. This way when the dumplings are cooked, they have a certain texture—soft, but not falling apart.  
I am super excited that Conagra Foods offers P.F. Chang's dumplings, available at Meijer and Publix. The team worked diligently with the bistro to choose the right ingredients for the P.F. Chang’s Chinese dumplings recipe. For example, we made sure to use pork shoulder (some of the tastiest parts of the pig) to result in a juicy dumpling. We also worked to find the right balance between all the flavors for a salty and savory dumpling that pairs perfectly with the slightly sweet, hot mustard-soy dipping sauce that comes with them. Anyone who is a P.F. Chang’s fan knows about the condiments trio served with the dumplings, and this dipping sauce is made with the same ingredients (cool, huh?). Even the dumpling wrapper is rolled to a similar thickness as a homemade dumpling to ensure a chewy wrapper.  
  
Dumplings are traditionally boiled or steamed, but another fun way to prepare dumplings is to pan-fry them so they are super crispy on the bottom. Pair them with P.F. Chang’s White Rice and some veggies to make a wonderful meal!  
  
You can also try these easy Chinese New Year dumpling recipes:  
  
Pan-fried Chinese dumplings recipe:  
  
Add 1 tablespoon of oil to a 10-inch nonstick skillet and coat evenly.  
    
 Place dumplings in a single layer seam-side up and add 1/3 cup of water (which is just enough to cover the bottom of the skillet).  
    
 Cover and cook over medium-high heat for 8-10 minutes, until the water has evaporated and bottoms of dumplings are browned. Do not move dumplings while they are cooking or they will not brown as well.  
    
 Check that dumplings are cooked through.  
 EAT!  
Boiled Chinese dumplings recipe:  
  
Fill a pot 2/3 full with water and bring to a boil over high heat.  
 Add dumplings to boiling water and cook 8-9 minutes. Drain.  
 EAT!Amanda Vuu is an Associate Development Chef for Conagra Foods.