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## Singapore Noodles

From *America's Test Kitchen* Season 15: Southeast Asian Specialties

### WHY THIS RECIPE WORKS:

Singapore noodles, a traditional Hong Kong favorite, are often so heavily seasoned with curry powder that they can feel unpleasantly dusty and gritty. We start by blooming the curry powder in oil, which smooths out the texture and intensifies the flavor. Though the noodles are the main feature in the traditional dish, we tweak the ratios of starch, vegetables, and protein for a balanced, one-dish meal. Cutting the noodles to slightly shorter lengths, though unconventional, makes the components easier to incorporate and the dish easier to eat.

### Serves 4 to 6

For spicier Singapore noodles, add the optional cayenne pepper. Look for dried rice vermicelli in the Asian section of your supermarket. A rasp-style grater makes quick work of turning the garlic into a paste.

### INGREDIENTS

- 4** tablespoons plus 1 teaspoon vegetable oil
- 2** tablespoons curry powder
- 1/8** teaspoon cayenne pepper (optional)
- 6** ounces rice vermicelli
- 2** tablespoons soy sauce
- 1** teaspoon sugar
- 12** ounces large shrimp (26 to 30 per pound), peeled, deveined, tails removed, and cut into 1/2-inch pieces
- 4** large eggs, lightly beaten
- Salt
- 3** garlic cloves, minced to paste
- 1** teaspoon grated fresh ginger
- 1** red bell pepper, stemmed, seeded, and cut into 2-inch-long matchsticks
- 2** large shallots, sliced thin
- 2/3** cup chicken broth
- 4** ounces (2 cups) bean sprouts
- 4** scallions, cut into 1/2-inch pieces
- 2** teaspoons lime juice, plus lime wedges for serving

### INSTRUCTIONS

1. Heat 3 tablespoons oil, curry powder, and cayenne, if using, in 12-inch nonstick skillet over medium-low heat, stirring occasionally, until fragrant, about 4 minutes. Remove skillet from heat and set aside.
2. Bring 1 1/2 quarts water to boil. Place noodles in large bowl. Pour boiling water over noodles and stir briefly. Soak noodles until flexible, but not soft, about 2 1/2 minutes, stirring once halfway through soaking. Drain noodles briefly. Transfer noodles to cutting board. Using chef's knife, cut pile of noodles roughly into thirds. Return noodles to bowl, add curry mixture, soy sauce, and sugar; using tongs, toss until well combined. Set aside.
3. Wipe out skillet with paper towels. Heat 2 teaspoons oil in skillet over medium-high heat until shimmering. Add shrimp in even layer and cook without moving them until bottoms are browned, about 90 seconds. Stir and continue to cook until just cooked through, about 90 seconds longer. Push shrimp to 1 side of skillet. Add 1 teaspoon oil to cleared side of skillet. Add eggs to clearing and sprinkle with 1/4 teaspoon salt. Using rubber spatula, stir eggs gently until set but still wet, about 1 minute. Stir eggs into shrimp and continue to cook, breaking up large pieces of egg, until eggs are fully cooked, about 30 seconds longer. Transfer shrimp-egg mixture to second large bowl.
4. Reduce heat to medium. Heat remaining 1 teaspoon oil in now-empty skillet until shimmering. Add garlic and ginger and cook, stirring constantly, until fragrant, about 15 seconds. Add bell pepper and shallots. Cook, stirring frequently, until vegetables are crisp-tender, about 2 minutes. Transfer to bowl with shrimp.
5. Return skillet to medium-high heat, add broth to skillet, and bring to simmer. Add noodles and cook, stirring frequently, until liquid is absorbed, about 2 minutes. Add noodles to bowl with shrimp and vegetable mixture and toss to combine. Add bean sprouts, scallions, and lime juice and toss to combine. Transfer to warmed platter and serve immediately, passing lime wedges separately.

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## TECHNIQUE

### CURRY POWDER: MILD VERSUS MADRAS

Most curry powders fall into one of two categories: mild or "sweet" (often identified by the lack of any description on the label) and hotter Madras style (which usually is identified as such). Both types contain turmeric, which accounts for the yellow color, as well as warm spices like cumin, ginger, and cardamom. But Madras curry powder has a higher ratio of dried chile and black pepper, which makes it spicier.

## TECHNIQUE

### UNTANGLING SINGAPORE NOODLES

Two easy steps help avoid the usual ball of noodles that forms when you toss the rice vermicelli with the shrimp and vegetables.

**SHORTEN THE STRANDS:** Cutting the soaked and drained rice vermicelli into thirds makes them less tangle-prone.



**LUBRICATE WITH CURRY OIL:** Coating the noodles with curry oil prevents them from sticking. "Blooming" the spice in oil also boosts its flavor, softens its gritty texture, and adds richness.



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## RECOMMENDED EQUIPMENT



Microplane Classic Zester Grater...



Victorinox 8" Swiss Army Fibrox...



Rubbermaid Professional...



OXO Good Grips 12-Inch Locking...



T-fal Professional Non-Stick Fry...