

Cauliflower Adobo

By Ali Slagle

YIELD 4 servings

TIME 45 minutes

Chicken adobo (<https://cooking.nytimes.com/recipes/1013419-chicken-adobo>), the national dish of the Philippines, is made by braising chicken in a salty, sour and sweet mixture of mostly soy sauce and vinegar. In this vegetarian version, cauliflower, rather than chicken, is caramelized on one side, then simmered in the pungent but not prickly sauce until toothsome yet tender. The simmer mellows the vinegar and soy sauce into a sauce interlaced with pepper, garlic and something herbal but not immediately traceable — that’s the bay leaves. Serve the cauliflower and sauce over rice or another grain with something green on the side.

INGREDIENTS	PREPARATION
<p>1 large cauliflower (2 1/2 to 3 pounds)</p> <p>Kosher salt</p> <p>2 teaspoons black pepper, plus more as needed</p> <p>3 tablespoons canola oil, plus more as needed</p> <p>½ cup rice-wine vinegar</p> <p>5 tablespoons soy sauce</p> <p>2 teaspoons raw or light brown sugar</p> <p>6 garlic cloves, smashed and peeled</p> <p>3 bay leaves</p> <p>1 Thai chile, halved lengthwise, or 1/4 teaspoon red-pepper flakes</p> <p>3 scallions, thinly sliced, for serving</p>	<p>Step 1</p> <p>Trim leaves and woody stalk from the cauliflower, then cut through the root into 8 wedges. Season both sides of each wedge with salt and pepper. Reserve any loose cauliflower pieces.</p> <p>Step 2</p> <p>In a large skillet or Dutch oven, heat the oil over medium-high heat. Place one layer of the wedges in the skillet cut-side down and cook without moving them until well browned on one side, 3 to 4 minutes. Transfer to a plate and continue until all the cauliflower is seared, adding more oil as needed. Return all the cauliflower to the pan with uncooked side facing down.</p> <p>Step 3</p> <p>Add 1/4 cup water, any loose cauliflower pieces, 2 teaspoons black pepper, rice-wine vinegar, soy sauce, sugar, garlic, bay leaves and Thai chile. Cover and let simmer over medium heat until the cauliflower is crisp-tender, about 5 minutes.</p> <p>Step 4</p> <p>Uncover, turn the heat to medium-high, and cook, basting the cauliflower occasionally with the sauce, until the cauliflower is tender and the sauce has thickened and reduced to about 3/4 cup, 8 to 10 minutes.</p> <p>Step 5</p> <p>Serve the cauliflower with plenty of sauce and a sprinkle of scallions.</p> <p>Tip</p> <p><i>If you plan to eat rice with the adobo, bring 1 3/4 cups water to a boil in a medium saucepan before you start the recipe. Stir in 1 teaspoon salt and 1 cup long-grain rice, cover, and let simmer on the lowest heat possible for 18 minutes. Proceed with the adobo. Let the rice sit, covered and off the heat, until the adobo is ready. Fluff rice with a fork before serving.</i></p>

PRIVATE NOTES

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