

smitten kitchen

- [About](#)
- [Apple Recipes](#)
- [Archives](#)
- [Breakfast](#)
- [Celebration Cakes](#)
- [Chocolate](#)
- [Comment Guidelines](#)
- [Cookie Recipes](#)
- [Cooking Conversions and Equivalents](#)
- [deb's new york](#)
- [Events & Book Tour](#)
- [Gift-Worthy](#)
- [Links](#)
- [Notes](#)
- [notes and tips from rome](#)
- [Party Food](#)
- [Pumpkin and Other Winter Squash Recipes](#)
- [Recipe Index](#)
- [Salads](#)
- [Search Results](#)
- [Sitemap](#)
- [Soup Recipes](#)
- [Subscribe](#)
- [Thanksgiving Ideas](#)
- [The Smitten Kitchen Cookbook](#)
- [Topic Index](#)
- [where we ate in paris](#)

« [for beaming, bewitching breads](#)
[baked tomato sauce](#) »

Monday, February 19, 2007

vegetable dumplings



In case I haven't broadcasted this loudly enough in the 114 entries prior to today, I tend to get a little obsessive in the kitchen when trying to find "perfect" recipes. "Perfect" is always some approximation of an ideal that got etched in my tastebuds in some other time and place — there's [salted butter caramel](#) (Paris), [bretzel rolls](#) (a Fresh Direct discovery), [frisee with poached eggs](#) (Balthazar, 2003) and [one day soon](#), those truffles from La Maison du Chocolat, as my wee Valentine's Day supply has rapidly diminished. I know better than to try to go back to such a place and expect the same experiences time after time, but it doesn't mean I can't have warming fits of nostalgia when I find a lost flavor on my dinner plate.

Case in point today is the steamed vegetable dumplings from [Ollie's](#), a small chain of large Chinese restaurants up the west side of Manhattan. Growing up, I was absorbed with them and it's (of course) my mother's fault, as she would bring an order of them home for us after spending a day in the city, and I'd have them cold directly from the refrigerator as soon as I woke up the next day. They were perfect: dense but not too heavy, brightly flavored and full of tiny but easily-recognized ingredients — no mystery blend here!



Once I moved to New York, a friend and I made the stunning discovery that an order of dumplings and a beer was pretty much the best weekday night dinner there could ever be, and made a weekly ritual of it, until one day, horror of horrors, they changed the recipe, and my glorious order of steamed vegetable goodness was replaced with a filling of foul vegetable mush. They didn't consult me! I was their self-appointed dumpling evangelist and they just up and changed recipes and now... now I had no place to get my fix.

In the four years since, I've tried endless combinations of vegetables, tofu and seasonings and I just can't get it right. Alex, always the cheerleader, loves them all but I only frustrate because they're not *those dumplings*. I know I should move past this and just enjoy a good dumpling for what it is, but I'm just not wired like that. Last night I tried Alton Brown's recipe, and the experience was no different. They were delicious, and yes, I have already enjoyed them today cold from the fridge, but all I know is that they weren't *them*.



There were also a few problems with the buggers. First, there was too much liquid, and despite draining probably the best flavor out of each spoonful before stuffing the wonton wrappers, I was leaking juices with each crimp. In addition, he suggests you steam them but I learned the hard way that wonton-wrapped dumpling do not hold up in the steamer. Their skins are too thin and fall to mush when you try to lift them out. I was able to save them by plopping them in a hot, oiled pan and making much more structurally-sound potstickers of them, and I'd suggest if you make these that you do the same. Finally, they had great flavor, but they were pretty tofu-heavy. While this isn't a bad thing per se, I didn't want any one ingredient to dominate. It just didn't match my obsessive dumpling ideal.



None of this stops them from being crazy delicious, and if you aren't as irritatingly fixated on your vegetable dumplings tasting like one thing and one thing only, I highly recommend them. Trying to keep with our Chinese-American theme, we served them with a salad tossed with my favorite spicy sesame dressing, [hoisin pork riblets](#) (because we really can't get enough of them) and, though unrelated, an [unbelievably satisfying rice pudding](#) Luisa wrote about weeks ago. Dave, Dups and Conroy came over to help me oggle the gorgeous men on [Rome](#), and we ate in the New York Sunday night tradition, minus the white take-out boxes.

Speaking of the Roman-ogling and the three boys, I can't resist sharing this: Yesterday morning, as I was picking recipes and making a shopping list for the evening, I watched (as usual) the Barefoot Contessa on the Food Network, who was (as usual) cooking a meal for one of her gay, JCrew-clad friends and I was completely charmed, actually saying to Alex, with total obliviousness, "Do you think in 20 years I can have fabulous dinners for my gay friends like she does?" "Um, honey?"



Vegetarian Dumplings

Adapted from [Alton Brown](#)

- 1/2 pound firm tofu
- 1/2 cup coarsely grated carrots
- 1/2 cup shredded Napa cabbage
- 2 tablespoons finely chopped red pepper
- 2 tablespoons finely chopped scallions
- 2 teaspoons finely minced fresh ginger
- 1 tablespoon chopped cilantro leaves
- 2 minced cloves garlic (Deb addition)
- 1 tablespoon soy sauce
- 1 tablespoon hoisin sauce
- 2 teaspoons toasted sesame oil (I replace 1 teaspoon with hot sesame oil — delicious)
- 1 egg, lightly beaten
- 1 teaspoon kosher salt
- 1/4 teaspoon freshly ground black pepper
- 35 to 40 small wonton wrappers
- 1/3 cup chicken stock or water

Preheat the oven to 200°F.

Cut the tofu in half horizontally and lay between layers of paper towels. Place on a plate, top with another plate, and place a weight on top (a 14-ounce can of vegetables works well). Let stand 20 minutes. After 20 minutes, cut the tofu into 1/4-inch cubes and place in a large mixing bowl. Add the carrots, cabbage, red pepper, scallions, ginger, cilantro, soy sauce, hoisin, sesame oil, egg, salt, and pepper. Lightly stir to combine.

To form the dumplings, remove 1 wonton wrapper from the package, covering the others with a damp cloth. Brush the edges of the wrapper lightly with water. Place 1/2 rounded teaspoon of the tofu mixture in the center

of the wrapper. Shape as desired*. Set on a sheet pan and cover with a damp cloth. Repeat procedure until all of the filling is gone.

Heat a 12-inch saute pan over medium heat. Brush with vegetable oil once hot. Add 8 to 10 potstickers at a time to the pan and cook for 2 minutes, without touching. Once the 2 minutes are up, gently add 1/3 cup chicken stock to the pan, turn the heat down to low, cover, and cook for another 2 minutes.

Remove wontons to a heatproof platter and place in the warm oven. Repeat until all the wontons are cooked.

Serve immediately.

* **Shaping and storing dumplings dumplings:** [Epicurious has some great demos](#) if you're looking to get the type of crimp you see above. (Though I am far less careful, of course.) A few other things I suggest: parchment paper, not foil. Keep them good and separate — these thin-skinned wonton wrappers will stick to each other and never come apart. Finally, even if I am using the dumplings within a day, I *always* freeze them. Do so right on the parchment-lined tray, making sure none are touching. Once they are frozen solid, you can pop them in a freezer bag and keep them for a long while in the freezer. Even if you're using them soon, they're much easier to handle frozen. Believe me, I have learned the hard, sobbing way more than once.

Simplest Dumpling Dipping Sauce

1/4 cup soy sauce
1 tablespoon rice vinegar
1 tablespoon dark sesame oil or 1/2 tablespoon dark, 1/2 tablespoon hot sesame oil
1 small clove garlic, minced (optional)

Sesame Dressing

Adapted from [Gourmet, July 2001](#)

1 (1/2-inch-thick) slice peeled fresh ginger
1/4 cup Asian sesame paste or smooth peanut butter
3 tablespoons Asian sesame oil
1/4 cup rice vinegar (not seasoned)
1 1/2 tablespoons sugar
2 tablespoons water
1 teaspoon Asian chile paste with garlic*
1/2 teaspoon salt

Blend all dressing ingredients in a blender until smooth. Dressing keeps, covered tightly and chilled, 1 week.

See more: [Appetizer](#), [Chinese](#), [Dumplings](#), [Photo](#), [Salad](#)

Do more: [Link](#) | [Bookmark](#) | [Pin](#) | [Print](#) | [Email](#) | [79 Comments](#)

- [Mary](#) [February 19, 2007](#)

1

I can't believe this, you have made exactly the food that I have been wanting to test out and write about, and eat, of course. Amazing.

- [Julie](#) [February 19, 2007](#)

2

I'm sorry they weren't what you were looking for because those are some nice looking dumplings. Beautifully crimped!

- [Jessica](#) [February 19, 2007](#)

3

This all looks delicious and BTW, I am making the baby pretzels for a party on Friday night. I haven't had an opportunity to make them because I won't waste the time for two people....

- [tammy](#) [February 19, 2007](#)

4

you continue to amaze me with your skills and techniques and your never ending determination – yummy!

- [Rachael](#) [February 19, 2007](#)

5

I love the shape of those carrots in the salad!! Just made some dumplings turned potstickers myself, though no cabbage in them at all. I also added sesame seeds to the mix – totally untraditional, I know, but I'm obsessed with sesame seeds for some reason

Mmm, pork riblets. Photos like that make me want to eat meat again!

- *Abbey* [February 19, 2007](#)

6

Did you ever go back there and ask why they changed their recipe? If they're not using it anymore, they might actually be willing to share the secret!

But once the secret is out, will the magical dumplings lose their mysterious appeal? Once you've identified just what the "Je ne sais quoi" about them is, will they still be just as delicious? ;-)

- *Chris* [February 19, 2007](#)

7

Everything looks lovely! And, I agree with Rachel – the shape those carrots are wonderful!

- *Jenifer from Houston* [February 19, 2007](#)

8

First off...I love dumplings too and would love to recreate the ones that I ate in San Francisco's China Town. Second off...LOVE the carrot flowers. Now, you'll have to show us how you did it! (They put carrot flowers and hearts in my favorite Thai restaurant here in Houston. There are always spectacular carved fruit and vegetable displays when you walk in...hmmm maybe that should go on my cooking class list???)

- *gretchen* [February 19, 2007](#)

9

Do you think the mystery element might have been MSG? (There was just that whole article in the Times about how MSG is delicious and tasty and probably-not-bad-for-you-but-who-knows?)

- *deb* [February 19, 2007](#)

10

Mary — Hooray for synchrony! I felt that way when Luisa mentioned that rice pudding weeks ago.

Julie — Every time I make dumplings, the filling is a cinch but I spend HOURS with the filling and pressing. More than once, it's taken over an hour and a half and we've had to order dinner instead. But then I go out for Chinese, and I see someone behind the counter making dumplings and they're sooo fast. I've vowed to speed up my technique... last night, I did the crimp-on-one-side only thing (like wrapping a present!) and it was a bit faster. Plus, they looked a little like squid or octopi!

Jessica — Good luck! I mention this in the post, but if you want a dark, browner skin on them, up the baking soda and add some sugar to the water. I did this for the bretzels and liked their color much more.

Tammy — Ha, thank you. But really, I only tell you about the things I obsess over, so you get a slanted view. ;)

Rachael — I loove sesame seeds and think that would taste great, especially if toasted first. Great idea. As for the whole MEAT thing, I'm sure you notice I barely ever cook meat, but these... these transcend.

Still, I bet you could (food purists, cover your ears) use that same marinade in a tofu dish and it would be delish. It's really all about the hoisin, anyway.

Abbey — Funny you should say that. In disbelief, I once, twice and then three times returned that fateful spring, each time facing graver disappointment. I haven't been back since. But, pondering dumplings this weekend, I searched Chowhound for recent news, and was surprised to find that many 'hounders still speak highly of their dumplings, even calling them "among the best." Thus, it is time to return. And if I do, and they have returned to their earlier greatness, I will bring both a magnifying glass as well as a camera to study their insides, because I can't trust Ollie's not to switch things up again. — Though wouldn't it be funny if their j.n.s.q. was crack? (As I've long suspected.) Or, er, MSG?

Chris — The carrots were another fit of nostalgia, as I always remember that chinese restaurants would do that in stir-fries growing up. I just made little bevels down a peeled one, and sliced it thin. The trick is to make a shallow, angled cut in with a large knife in two directions, so the strip falls right out. You can then dip them in dressing to snack before people arrive.

Jenifer — Carrot hearts! I am soo tempted. I think a Thai cooking class would be fantastic; I have the faintest idea how to get it right.

Gretchen — I have, many times. (And, hee hee, I know where to buy some, though I probably wouldn't.) If it's really artificial, I can do without. But I suspect it's good seasoning. Also? I swear, they used some minced glass/cellophane noodles in there for bulk. I might try that next time.

- [McAuliflower](#) [February 19, 2007](#)
11

"Shape as desired" what?! But this is one of the most important steps! I really wanted to see how you got those delightful pleats in your potstickers.

ps- I dare you to make [your own wrappers](#)*... I swear, its not that difficult *Oh Obsessive* one.

*http://www.foodnetwork.com/food/recipes/recipe/0,,FOOD_9936_4997,00.html

- [deb](#) [February 19, 2007](#)
12

You're right — that is terrifically vague. I find [these diagrams](#) very helpful and will update the recipe above to reflect that. However, I recommend parchment paper over foil.

I have totally considered making dumpling wrappers, especially now that I have a pasta-cranker that can make them so very thin, but it still seems unnecessary when I can buy 50 for \$1.50. Only if I wanted to make thicker ones, I think. Or manti/pierogi/or any other joyful and worldly dumplings.

- [Collette](#) [February 19, 2007](#)
13

Totally and completely off topic...HOWEVER. I went to NY for a spontaneous weekend (I live in Chicago) and had dinner last night (Sun) at the Bread Bar based on your oh-so-glowing recommendation.

And, I must say...so, so fabulous. I immediately called home and told my husband about it, whipping him into a frothy display of jealousy, which made me quite happy. (He shouldn't have stayed home. His fault.) So thank you for the recommendation and on my next visit, I'll scour your blog to see what other restaurants I should hit. Thanks!

- *floridagal* [February 20, 2007](#)

14

read ur blog after a long time....congrats on becoming the food blog winner :)

- *David* [February 20, 2007](#)

15

I don't wear J Crew, so I guess that means I'm not getting any dumplings :(

- *Freya* [February 20, 2007](#)

16

My husband is a dumpling obsessive. He makes his own dough, but always says they never taste as good as the ones he had in the US (he lives in the UK now). Having never had them in a restaurant myself, I think his taste delicious!

- *rube* [February 20, 2007](#)

17

Hiya,

Gor-gee-ous website! One suggestion re. water dumplings: My mom always salts the chopped napa cabbage first and lets it stand for, oh, 20 minutes, then squeezes out the excess water. After that, combine the napa with the rest of the ingredients.

OK, now I am going to print out your pizza dough recipe. Thanks!

- *Liz* [February 20, 2007](#)

18

If you're ever in the Park Slope area, you should try the steamed veggie dumplings at Red Hot on 7th ave and 11th street. Love them and can't find anything close elsewhere. They also have an orange tofu recipe that I would kill to be able to replicate. Mmm, you've got me hungry for Chinese food at 9 am.

- *Ani* [February 20, 2007](#)

19

I love Ollie's veggie dumplings. Don't hate me but my office is located in the same building as theirs. That is so neat you celebrated Chinese New Year with such delicious sounding meals. Mmmm! My kind of foodie.

- *rachel* [February 20, 2007](#)

20

These look great...we made the clear kind of shrimp dumpling with homemade wrappers no less, but they came out a little lumpy.

- [Jo February 20, 2007](#)

21

When I first saw the title, I was really confused, b/c having had the dumplings at Ollie's recently, I was grossed out. But then I read out. The Ollie's dumplings I ordered were green (almost teal) and filled w/ vegetable mush. Yuck. But these look tempting. I've found the frozen Trader Joe's dumplings to be pretty good also.

- *the pauper* [February 20, 2007](#)

22

hmm.. if you run into that problem with steaming, what happens if you try that trick chinese restaurants use and place a leaf of lettuce at the bottom? or you can try cloth. or how about boiling the dumplings? you might lose some flavor but you could try a flavored boiling liquid, maybe water + vegetable stock?

- [Tim February 20, 2007](#)

23

Don't wait 20 years! Just invite them over!

- [jnet February 20, 2007](#)

24

if i remember correctly ollie's definitely uses cellophane noodles in their filling for vegetable dumplings, its almost a MUST have for making veggie dumplings for chinese people. My family is mostly shanghaiense and when we make it we always added, cooked in a little bit of broth, drained, then roughly chopped. another thing we always always add is egg. u make almost a thing crepe out of it, then slice it up.

one tip on keeping the juices in the filling, is to cook those ingredients together, at least part-way thru. so theyre still mostly raw. you'll notice that as u've heated together the vegetables, more juices will come out. take about a tsp of cornstarch with a tblsp of water and make a little slurry and it will help u thicken that sauce enough so that the sauce is solid enough to be scooped into your little dumplings.

tip on dumpling skins- buy dumpling skins and not wonton skins! wonton skins are way thinner than what dumpling skins are. in my house, we make them from scratch. but if you must buy them buy the thicker cut dumpling skins. they are round as opposed to square wonton skins.

hope that helps you... making dumplings at home has been a New Year's tradition in my family for as long as i can remember. ive been making them since i was 7 years old!! =) this year we made some with chinese snake squash, shrimp, ground pork, and shitake mushrooms this year. yum!

- [Tai February 20, 2007](#)

25

Here's the secret to non-drippy filling: squeeze your cabbage. Cabbage gets incredibly soupy after it's chopped. I've found that a thin dishcloth or cheesecloth works the best. You just toss your chopped cabbage all in the cloth, gather the edges and twist until it is bone dry. This way you get to keep all of your flavoring, and none of it drips out. I do this with my tofu also, even after pressing it. You might also consider using just the egg white of your egg.

Also, there are lots of different kinds of dumpling pi, or wrappers. My personal favorite is the sturdier Shanghai potsticker ones, never the flimsy wontons. You could also use Japanese gyoza wrappers, they are thicker than all the rest. And with regard to boiling them — if you seal them just right, they don't lose their flavor at all. I add a slice of ginger and maybe a drop of sesame oil to the boiling water, and it is so fragrant.

Oh, and a piece of parchment paper with holes in it keeps the dumplings from sticking to the bamboo steamers. Not ezactly authentic... but spray it lightly with cooking spray, and you're good to go.

And the key to cutting down how long it takes to make dinner is to have a dumpling party. I'll invite 4-6 people over, plop the wrappers and small bowls of water (for the edges), and the big bowl of filling in the middle. I'll demonstrate the first one, and then I'm in charge of cooking them, while everyone else baos (wraps). You get some horrendous results at first, but everyone has so much fun, it's worth it.

- [deb February 20, 2007](#)
26

Collette — Hooray! Another Bread Bar convert. I have the cookbook from Floyd Cardoz now, but haven't made anything yet, tsk-tsk.

floridagal — Thank you.

David — Heh! My friends don't wear JCrew either and they hate both decorating and most show tunes. Come on over ã,¬Ä! but you must bring dessert.

Freya — An in-house dumpling-crimper, must be wonderful! Alex, you hear that?

rube — Good point about the salting and squeezing. Thx.

Liz — Ok! I used to get sesame tofu — pretty much the least healthy thing that has ever happened to the white stuff — on West 97th at Empire Sechuan that was so good. I miss it, but not enough to trek up there. Park Slope? Done!

Ani, Jo — One vote for them and one against! I am torn about whether to go back and try again. I think if they're still the mush, I'll just cry.

Rachel — I've done that too, now I just mince or grate everything. Does the trick.

the pauper — Boiling works great, and I've done it before, but it does come out more likeã,¬Ä! a wonton. Oh, the irony. But the leaf trick doesn't work just because they're still too thin. The skins are like paper, and just fall apart. With true dumpling wrappers, a bit thicker, it still works. Huh — maybe I'll double-up next time.

jnet — Thank you! I love all of your advice. And I hear you on the wonton skins; I know they're part of the problem. It used to be the stores sold both, right next to each other; nowadays I only see the wontons. Perhaps THIS will get me to roll out my own. Squash, pork and shitake sound very tasty.

Tai — Thanks for all the advice. I did squeeze the cabbage, but it's probably no match for cooking the ingredients first. Am I the only one who expected a better recipe from The Alton Brown? A dumpling party is a great idea!

- Jocelyn February 20, 2007

What about your straight friends, like me, who only know how to make reservations?
God you're so mean. Why do you hate me? FU, I am shaving my head, don't touch me, don't touch me.
AHH

- Kristen February 20, 2007

I have to first of all comment on those carrots in the salad. They are so pretty!

Next, I'm sorry the dumplings didn't turn out like you hoped. I think they look amazing!

- tommy February 20, 2007

Your dumplings look so pretty! But maybe you're missing the magic ingredient – chinese chives aka garlic chives aka koo chai?

- *piggie* [February 20, 2007](#)

you had me until I saw that you used premade wrappers!

lame lame lame

- deb February 20, 2007

Jocelyn — You are more than welcome to come over for Rome, Sunday nights at 9, but you are not allowed to shave off your gorgeous hair. It wouldn't be right. Skanky extensions? Not missed.

Kristen — They were very good. I'm just a pain in the butt. ;)

Tommy — Ooh, they sound delicious, and I've even seen them in my store lately. Sweet!

Piggie — It's not a contest, I promise.

- *Jessica* [February 20, 2007](#)
- 32

Deb, could you please post (or e-mail me) the recipe for the 1-2-3-4 cake? I know what the 1-2-3-4 is for, but is there any baking soda/powder in it or anything else?

jess (jessica dot diettrich at gmail dot com)

- [*deb* February 20, 2007](#)

33

Sorry Jessica! Here's the jest:

1-2-3-4 Cake

(From the Magnolia Bakery, Joy of Cooking and countless other sources)

1 cup (2 sticks) butter, at room temperature

2 cups sugar

4 eggs

3 cups sifted self-rising flour (or 3 cups all-purpose + 1 tsp. baking soda + 1 tsp. baking powder)(note: many recipes reduce this 3 cups to 2 3/4, but the core recipe is for 3 cups. I'd suspect the lower amount makes a more moist cake)

1/8 teaspoon salt

1 cup milk

1 teaspoon pure vanilla extract

3 9-inch cake pans, greased and floured, or a 24-cupcake pan, lined with papers

Preheat oven to 350. Using an electric mixer, cream butter until fluffy. Add sugar and continue to cream for 3 to 4 minutes. Add eggs one at a time, beating well after each addition. Whisk self-rising flour and salt or all-purpose flour, baking soda, powder and salt together in a small bowl. Mix milk with vanilla in a separate small bowl. Add flour mixture and milk/vanilla alternately to creamed mixture, beginning and ending with flour mixture. Divide batter equally among prepared pans or cupcake holders (1/2 full if you want flat cupcakes, 3/4 if you want domed cupcakes). Level batter in each pan, tapping it lightly on the counter several times, encouraging the air bubbles to escape. Bake cakes for 25 to 30 minutes, until tester comes out clean — cupcakes take less time, 22 to 25 minutes. Cool in pans 5 to 10 minutes. Invert cakes onto cooling racks. Cool completely.

- [*Cupcakes* February 20, 2007](#)

34

(i had to read all the posts to make sure i didnt copy cat someone)

When I use won-ton wrappers to make dumplings i steam them in my bamboo steamer lined with napa cabbage.. leaf it or shred it (which is what i do).. works great.. when the juice comes out of the dumpling it gets mixed into the cabbage.. yum. Adding a smidge of SAKI to the steaming water isnt a bad trick either... A smidge to the cook, a smidge in the steam, a smidge more for the cook... makes a wonderfull dinner!

- [*jocelyn* February 20, 2007](#)

35

Well, that was a great way to get myself an invite. I'll be in Vegas on Sunday night, but perhaps the week after. But then my Bermuda accident wants to visit....why can't I just be normal????

aha ah aha ha aha h ahha

- [*jill* February 20, 2007](#)

36

Oh my god, Deb, you must have read my mind. I was craving Chinese recently and all I wanted was an order of my beloved steamed spinach wontons from Ollie's. I used to get them during college all the time (at the Ollie's on 116th St – I don't know if the other branches have those steamed spinach wontons). Now that it's been almost 4 years since I've lived in NYC, I get increasingly frustrated that I can't have them... almost like the cravings have intensified... crazy. ANYWAY – have you had these delicious things? Any idea how to make those, or where I could start throwing ingredients together? Would be indebted to you forever!

- [*Lydia* February 21, 2007](#)

37

Great veggie dumplings are the best — I like them cooked in homemade chicken stock enhanced with a bit of ginger and scallion. I never make my own wrappers, so I'm at the mercy of whatever I've managed to buy in the market. For the filling, I like a kind of mushu filling, with the cabbage chopped really fine, tofu, oyster sauce, bean sprouts, etc. Are you freezing the leftovers — or are there no leftovers????

- [*Carrie* February 21, 2007](#)

38

These look great. If you're downtown you might try Sammy's vegetable dumplings on 6th Ave. & 11th. I've moved to Brooklyn, the land of mushy dumplings, and miss these and pretty much everything at Sammy's dearly.

- [*Yvo* February 21, 2007](#)

39

I was going to suggest the same things jnet did- line with napa cabbage and buy different wrappers. there are tons of wrapper kinds. I don't even know the difference- some say wonton, some say dumpling, some say HK dumpling but look liek wonton *headache* hehe. but yours look delectable.

funny thing about the riblets- I made ribs again on Monday, this time succumbing to peer pressure and using the oven. I decided to use my mom's recipe which is always delicious but I'd never made before.... it was great. But I KNOW I read your recipe back when you posted it, and it's pretty similar- hoisin, soy sauce, honey... but no garlic (I asked her, actually, on Sunday, do I put garlic but she said she didn't like the way it comes through) etc. funny.... I totally forgot about your variation. so good though!

- [*christina* February 22, 2007](#)

40

ok, this is probably terrible, but i'm skipping over the whole food-related part of your food-blog post to say OHMYGOODNESS i totally adore the barefoot contessa and her ridiculous, rich hamptonite

lifestyle, complete with gay j.crew-wearing friends, gorgeous shingled house, and always always fresh flowers. i want to be her when i grow up, because as far as i can tell, her main job is being fat and cooking/baking for her friends in those rarified environs. i'd be so good at that. also, have you ever noticed how she always calls for 'fresh-ground black pepper' in her recipes, then picks up a pinch from a tiny bowl full of pre-ground pepper? do you wonder who she's got hiding in the back pantry, just fresh-grinding her pepper for her, to save her the effort?

- [*Randi* February 25, 2007](#)

41

If you're looking for some amazing pork potstickers, check out the recipe from Cook's Illustrated. I made them a couple days ago (pics on my site) and they were so yummy.

- [*Darian* February 27, 2007](#)

42

Oh My Gawd..I was just in NY last year and Ollie's was just around the corner from the Hotel we stayed at. We ventured in, and went there 3 times during our 5 day trip! You just brought back how jealous I am that we don't have one here in LA.

- [*Christine* February 27, 2007](#)

43

okay, so more on the veggie dumpling making advice. You've already been told to squeeze the cabbage a bit (although my dad's advice is to just wrap it quickly after salting the ingredients), but in addition to using different wrappers, I'd suggest not using tofu but instead beancurd. Beancurd is almost firm tofu but not quite. The texture is even less mushy (at least compared to what I see labeled as extra firm tofu in my local market) and has much less water content. I'd suspect that with beancurd, you wouldn't even need to leave it under a weight to squeeze out the water. I also agree with glass noodles being a main ingredient. Although I'm not vegetarian, I've definitely had veggie dumplings before and it's weird because after reading through your post, I thought about it for a bit and could almost taste a veggie dumpling that I've had before (probably made by my dad), and it definitely had glass noodles. My dad is from north-ish China from a province where they're known for making dumplings and breads (or so he says).

- [*Michelle* February 28, 2007](#)

44

Deb- My husband and I are always fascinated by her collection of gay friends. My FAVORITE is the episode when she was preparing fingerfoods and those great linzer raspberry cookies for her regular card party with her friends. As she prepared for the party and talked about how much fun they all have together, I kept picturing this gaggle of hens (women, of course) sitting around eating, drinking martinis and playing cards. Not sure why I was so surprised, but when her friends showed up, they were all impeccably dressed gay men. My husband thought it was hilarious. BTW- I haven't been frequenting your site as much these days because I'm about 11 weeks pregnant and have been tossing my cookies for the last 5 weeks. I remember from your previous site that you talked about things to come in the future that may be able to ride in a Bugaboo and I just want to say KEEP COOKING AS MUCH AS POSSIBLE NOW before the sight of food turns your stomach and you wonder why you EVER loved cooking in the

first place. I got so many wonderful kitchen gadgets for the holidays this year and some are still in their boxes untouched!! :)

- [Meredith March 6, 2007](#)
45

OMG! I didn't think there were OTHER people out there searching for that 'perfect' recipe of something someone else made a really long time ago.

I found my 'perfect' carrot cake. Just working on the 'perfect' Cino muffin now, (9 recipes down... getting close).

- [Alina March 5, 2009](#)
46

I made dumplings!! I used store bought wrappers, and had cabbage (sprinkled salt and squeezed dry), minced chicken and shiitakes in them. Yum. You were the inspiration Deb!

My pleating didn't go so well, and the link to epicurious has been removed :(anyone else know how to go about it best?

- [Casey April 9, 2009](#)
47

for dumplings — go to etons. the very best.

- [Shannon April 27, 2009](#)
48

The link for epicurious isnt up anymore, or you have to be logged in as a member, are there pleating diagrams anywhere else? I usually just fold them into little rectangular pillows, but the pleating looks nice and very professional!

- [deb April 27, 2009](#)
49

[This link works](#), now updated. Gosh I wish large sites would get smart enough not to break their own permalinks!

- [Swati May 26, 2009](#)
50

Hi Deb.. by now I have become a great fan of yours, really trust your recipes. I just tried your mushroom strudel yesterday and my husband was drooling over it. Tried a couple of other things as well, and never had a disappointment yet... now, just curious, which one is your first post in this resource pool? curious — were you so deft then? :P Would be great to read those first ones :)

- [madfelice June 5, 2009](#)
51

Great recipe. I added some chinese chilli sauce to the vegetable mix and it was fabulous! I also used pork cutlets instead of riblets with the same marinade which was also pretty special! Loving your recipes!

- [*Cassie* July 1, 2009](#)

52

Deb,

Made these the other night and they were so good and not nearly as troublesome what with all the grating and wrapping that I expected! My husband claimed they were a little too heavy on the tofu but he had been looking at me askance ever since I put the tofu in the cart! I could have put in HALF the tofu and he would have said the same thing. I will definately make these little bits of chewy goodness again!

- [*Suzanne* July 2, 2009](#)

53

For over ten years I have declared and imagined that Ollie's steamed vegetable dumplings would be the main course at my "wedding" – I suppose simply meaning at whatever I was picturing to be "the most important event." Needless to say I share your passion and obsession. After 10 years in NYC I have moved to Boston for a bit, but a requirement when visiting New York is Ollies (I prefer the 116th location – but am partial – my passion grew while attending Columbia. The recipe change is true – but I am willing, somehow, to pretend that nothing's missing).

I am about to try Alton's recipe, and hope to feel as mediocre-ately satisfied as you did.

- [*Angela* July 12, 2009](#)

54

I loved those Ollies veggie dumplings years ago. They were my poor student dinner of choice. I'm in LA now and crave the tofu "sandwiches" you get at NYC steam table delis. Would you post a recipe for those sometime? You know the ones, a square of tofu stuffed with chopped somethings, marinated in something delicious.

- [*jessie* October 22, 2009](#)

55

OMG!!! how did you made those pretty little carrot flowers???

I'm impressed, Now you've got to tell me how you made them!!

- [*maljax* November 24, 2009](#)

56

I think the dumplings are actually better when you cook them after freezing them. It's whacky, and I don't understand it, but that's what I have noticed.

- [*Jonathan Shanes* April 25, 2010](#)

57

I used your inspired filling but steamed them in a bamboo steamer first lining it with lettuce. By freesig the

dumplings and carefully placing them so they do not touch one another and steaming them for 10 minutes, they came out perfect and delicious.

- *Lindsay W* [May 2, 2010](#)

58

I'm new to your blog but have made a few of your recipes so far and they ate great! I really enjoy reading your posts. I just had to tell you I went to Columbia and we had an Ollie's near by. I'm not kidding when I say I practically subsisted on Ollie's vegetable dumplings my junior year when I had to share a kitchen with some pretty filthy guys. I know what you mean about never being able to duplicate them! If you find a recipe even close let me know please!

- *Briana* [May 24, 2010](#)

59

I just made these after having the recipe bookmarked for almost a year. They were great.

- *Basil* [July 25, 2010](#)

60

I made these two days ago, froze them like you recommended, and then had them for dinner last night. I never knew how much fun dumplings could be to make, and eat! These turned out so great- even if I could never make mine as pretty as yours. I found your blog a while back, and have been poking around for a while. So many pretty pictures, you have nearly sent me to tears several times. I hope you come up with more winners like this one (especially vegetarian ones).

- *MYMMY* [October 14, 2010](#)

61

I know this is an old article but you mentioned that there was too much liquid. I'm Chinese and when we make dumplings at home, I was always told to put the filling in the fridge to chill, so the vegetable can mingle with each other and the juice gets absorbed back into the vegetables.

- *lisa* [February 14, 2011](#)

62

I was looking for veg dumplings & found the Alton Brown recipe before I found your site. I am SO glad that I came here before I made 'em. I used the garlic, and followed the method on epicurious. I used "dumpling skins" instead of wonton skins and had no problem with leakage etc. When I got halfway through there was a puddle of sauce in my filling bowl and I poured it off & used that to seal the dumplings instead of water. (seemed a shame not to use it!) Thanks for the advice. You rock!

- *Marina* [March 10, 2011](#)

63

Hi Deb,

I've been reading your blog for a long time, but today for the first time I found I could help.

As many readers, I also follow other blogs and i remembered a lovely japanese lady who makes Yaki Gyozas (a japanese version of your chinese Dumplings). Maybe she can help:

<http://www.youtube.com/user/cookingwithdog#p/u/26/r8MBX-SXnmg>

- [*Phoebe* December 8, 2011](#)

64

My biggest challenge after moving away from home and making dumplings on my own was how to get them to “taste Chinese”; i.e. taste just the way my mom made them. This was almost impossible but I found with the addition of lots of chives, cilantro, shitake (the dried kind rehydrated), and bamboo shoots (they can be found cheaply canned), also with a bit of dark soy sauce, my dumplings came out very fragrant. I’ve read through the comments carefully and I don’t believe anyone else has suggested bamboo shoots or yellow chives. Some great suggestions here about adding cornstarch and refridgerating the filling. This happened naturally at my house because my mom made the filling a little ahead of time and had to wait while my sister and finished our piano practice to come help. I remember the water settled on the bottom of the bowl. I also suggest getting a friend or two to come over to help wrap. Dinner is ready quicker and the friends get to take some home with them. Dumpling party!

- [*Susan* January 28, 2012](#)

65

Do you use a nonstick pan or regular saute pan?

- [*deb* January 28, 2012](#)

66

Susan — Either will work.

- [*RE* March 7, 2012](#)

67

Hi Deb!

I have been digging through the archives of your blog for a few months, trying some recipes here and there, but these are my favorite!! I could only find square wonton wrappers so they had to be crimped in a triangle. I made a small batch and then froze them, and tested them out for lunch today. UH-MAZE-ING. I am going to use up the rest of the tofu today to make a zillion and keep them in the freezer. Thanks for a delicious simple recipe!

- [*Steph* March 15, 2012](#)

68

Deb, did you just fry them in the pan (and skip the steaming part that usually comes after)?

I tried to make potstickers today but could only find wonton wrappers. I made them and froze them, and tried to cook them the way I do the storebought kind. I browned the bottoms in a pan with some vegetable oil (that part worked really well), then added about half a cup of water, lowered the heat, and put the lid on to steam them. But when I went to take them out, most of the bottoms stuck to the pan! A

few came out (the ones on the edge) but the bottoms weren't crispy any more. Not sure if I left them for too long or what. Any thoughts?

(I did have success steaming them covered in the microwave with a little bit of water, though.)

I've been reading the blog for a few weeks, by the way, and really enjoying it!

- [*deb* March 15, 2012](#)

69

Steph — Oh, ha. That happens to me almost every time. A nonstick will omit the problem, but doesn't brown as well. I think it would also help to really keep the potstickers browning longer, so that their "seal" is toasted enough to release fairly easily. Then again, I am sure they are called potstickers for this reason!

- [*Danielle* August 26, 2012](#)

70

Hello! I love that these can be frozen, but how does cooking them fresh differ from cooking them frozen? Do you simply cook them longer in the chicken broth? Could I still boil them (my preferred method for making dumplings), and boil them longer? Thank you for your help!

- [*deb* August 26, 2012](#)

71

Danielle — You can cook them from frozen; you just need another couple minutes in the pan. I don't see why you couldn't boil them too (longer, as you said), but I've never made them this way.

- [*Megan* September 7, 2012](#)

72

I too love just about anything in the Chinese dumplings family. Potstickers and egg rolls from my favorite restaurant growing up make my mouth water on a regular basis. I also am obsessive about finding the perfect recipe and when I set out to make vegetable dumplings on my own, like you, all were delicious but none were exactly what I was looking for. I came across a recipe that called for celery in the filling which I thought was completely strange so I ruled it out. After trying time and time again I finally added a few thinly sliced celery stocks to my filling and wah la! Finally something that tasted amazing and most importantly reminiscent of what I have been craving. Give celery a try in your filling if you haven't done so! Worst case scenario you have some not quite right but very delicious dumplings to eat.

- [*Erin* November 26, 2012](#)

73

I made these last night for my husband and I and they were AMAZING! Thank you so much for sharing this delicious recipe :) I substituted the red peppers and cabbage for a whole bunch of shiitake mushrooms (we are mushroom-a-holics!) and it turned out very well.

- [*Emily* December 12, 2012](#)

74

I'm going to make these for our January 2012 month of vegetarian eating. However, I thought i'd pass on a recipe a good Japanese friend gave me for pork dumplings. 1lb lean ground pork, enough sesame oil to smell fragrant, enough soy sauce to turn the meat dark and finely diced asian (also known as Chinese) leeks. The Asian leeks are super garlicky and a little bit oniony – - they are a joy. Mix together, then spoon into the premade shells. Steam for 5 minutes or until the wrapper sticks firmly to the filling. Fry until the bottom of the dumplings brown nicely. Serve with 50/50 soy sauce/rice wine vinegar with a few drops chili oil. These dumplings are also lovely with short grain white rice!

- *Nikki* [January 1, 2013](#)

75

These were a lot of work but totally worth it. The peanut dipping sauce I'd like to try on noodles. So tasty!

- *Laura* [February 17, 2013](#)

76

I've been making similar dumplings for awhile now but never cooked them like you suggest here....DIVINE! They come out all gooey and sloppy and savory after cooking in broth. Had to laugh at the use of chicken broth in a vegetarian recipe though.

- *Alex* [April 16, 2013](#)

77

Your vegetable dumplings look and sound grea. Totally something I can make. I am going to try them. I'll let you know how they turn out. Thanks for thr recipe. Alex

- *Abbie* [August 22, 2013](#)

78

Not as hard as I thought they would be and way more fun than a typical dinner. Having two people (one of whom, my husband, bless him, isn't what you would call efficient in the kitchen) helped cut down all the time the grating and squeezing took. The only changes I would make next time is cutting the oil in the sauce to just a splash and making sure the pan is good and hot before starting because my first batch was undercooked.

- *Abbie* [August 22, 2013](#)

79

P.S. My cast-iron pan worked really well.

Comment

[New here? You might want to check out the [Comment Guidelines](#) before chiming in.]

Name (required)

Mail (will not be published but required)

Website



- Welcome!
 - [About](#) | [FAQ](#)
 - [Recipes](#)
 - [Surprise Me!](#)
 - [RSS](#) | [Comments RSS](#)
 - [Subscribe by Email](#)
- Resources
 - [Conversions](#)
 - [Tips](#) | [Tips RSS](#)
 - [Topics](#)
- More Smitten Kitchen
 - On [Facebook](#) | [Twitter](#) | [Flickr](#) | [Instagram](#) | [Pinterest](#)

- It's Here!



-
- [Where to Buy](#)
- [Events & Book Touring](#)

YOU DON'T HAVE TO
BE PERFECT TO BE
A PERFECT PARENT

THOUSANDS OF
TEENS IN FOSTER
CARE WOULD
LOVE TO PUT UP
WITH YOU

ADOPTUSKIDS.ORG



- Recently
 - [cheese blintz](#)
 - [homemade dulce de leche](#)
 - [warm lentil and potato salad](#)
 - [pear and hazelnut muffins](#)
 - [chicken phở](#)

- Browse By



spring



summer



fall



winter



vegetable



fruit



- **smitten kitchen prints**

© 2006–2014 [Smitten Kitchen](#), LLC | [Contact](#) | Subscribe: [Email](#), [RSS](#), [Twitter](#)
[Powered by WordPress](#), [Martha's Circle](#) advertising

