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Pearl Balls

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By [Rhonda Parkinson](#), About.com Guide

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What makes this appetizer stand out are the grains of glutinous rice (also called sweet or sticky rice), which turn a pearly color when cooked. Note: While the preparation and cooking time for the Pearl Balls is under an hour, be sure to allow several hours for soaking the glutinous rice. The easiest method is simply to soak it overnight.

*Makes approximately 28 - 30 balls.

Prep Time: 25 minutes

Cook Time: 35 minutes

Ingredients:

- 3/4 cup glutinous rice (also called sweet or sticky rice, available at Chinese or Asian markets)
- 1 pound pork or ground pork
- 1 large green onion (spring onion) minced (at least 3 tablespoons)
- 2 water chestnuts, minced
- 1 large egg white
- 1 tablespoon light soy sauce
- 1 tablespoon dry sherry
- 1 teaspoon salt
- Black pepper, to taste
- 1 teaspoon cornstarch, or as needed

Preparation:

1. Soak the glutinous rice in water for at least 6 - 8 hours (preferably overnight). Drain well in a sieve or colander. Spread out the rice on a baking sheet. **Note:** Drain and spread out the rice just before making the pearl balls, so that the rice doesn't dry out too much.
2. Mince or grind the pork if not using ground pork.
3. In a large bowl, combine the pork, soy sauce, sherry, green onion, water chestnuts, salt, pepper, egg white and cornstarch.
4. Prepare the steamer for steaming.
5. Take about 1 tablespoon of the ground pork mixture and form into a ball. Roll lightly over the glutinous rice and place on a heatproof plate. Continue with the rest of the pork mixture, placing the balls 1/2-inch apart. (You will need at least 2 plates).
6. Place the plates in a steamer container or on a bamboo basket in a wok. Cover and steam the pearl balls over boiling water for between 25 - 35 minutes, until they are cooked through. Steam in two batches if needed.



Pearl Ball Appetizer
Rhonda Parkinson

7. Serve the pearl balls hot with soy sauce.

Variation:

Add a few softened Chinese black mushrooms and/or minced ginger to the pork mixture.

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Japanese cuisine includes these balls, too, January 11, 2009 By Lesley007

"I've made these balls for years and learned how to make them at a course at my local Japanese-Canadian Cultural Centre. They are delicious and worth the moderate effort to make. I'm going to make them this year, the Year of the Brown Cow. Happy New Year to all our Chinese-American and Chinese-Canadian friends!"

12 of 15 people found this review helpful.

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