

# Steamed Pork Buns with Chive (猪肉韭菜包子)

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A thorough guide to making authentic Chinese steamed pork buns with chive, from scratch, including step-by-step photos and tips to help you succeed. The buns will come out extra juicy, fluffy, and tender - even better than those you get at a restaurant.



Prep Time:  
2 hrs

Cook Time:  
20 mins

Total Time:  
2 hrs 20 mins

Course: Appetizer   Cuisine: Chinese   Keyword: restaurant-style   Servings: 12 buns (or 2 4 servings)

Author: Maggie Zhu

## INGREDIENTS

### Ginger Water

- 120 ml (1/2 cup) boiling water
- 2 " (5 cm) ginger , minced

### Dough

- 150 ml (1/2 cup + 2 tablespoons) warm water
- 4 g (1 teaspoon) sugar
- 3 g (1 teaspoon) active dry yeast
- 300 g (2 cups) all-purpose flour

### Filling

- 300 g (11 oz) ground pork
- 1 tablespoon oyster sauce
- 1 tablespoon light soy sauce (or regular soy sauce)
- 1 teaspoon dark soy sauce
- 1/2 tablespoon Shaoxing wine (or dry sherry)
- 2 teaspoons cornstarch
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 1/2 teaspoon sugar
- 1/8 teaspoon ground white pepper
- 1 tablespoon toasted sesame oil
- 8 stalks Chinese chives , sliced into 1/4" (0.5 cm) pieces

### Dipping sauce

- Chinkiang vinegar
- Soy sauce (Optional)
- Homemade chili oil (Optional)

## INSTRUCTIONS

### Make ginger water

1. Add the minced ginger to a small bowl and pour the boiling water over it. Let cool completely. Then drain off the ginger using a fine mesh strainer and discard it. (\*Footnote 1)

## Mix the dough & 1st rise

1. Heat the water in the microwave or over the stovetop until warm to the touch, about 110°F (43°C).
2. Add the sugar to the water and stir to dissolve.
3. Add the yeast. Let sit for 5 minutes or until the yeast is bubbling up.
4. Option 1 - use a stand mixer: Add the flour into the mixing bowl and pour the water into the center. Mix on low with the dough hook until a shaggy dough forms. Keep mixing and gradually turn the speed to 3, until the dough is smooth and elastic, 15 minutes or so. After 8 minutes, if the dough does not come together, use your hands to help gather the flour on the bottom. Keep mixing for another 3 to 5 minutes. If there's still flour left, slowly add more water, 1 teaspoon at a time, until a smooth dough forms. The dough should be slightly tough to touch and feeling a bit tacky, but doesn't stick to your hands. Shape the dough a few more times with your hands so it forms a round ball.
5. Option 2 - knead with your hands: Add the water into a big mixing bowl. Slowly drizzle the water with yeast into the flour while stirring with chopsticks in a circular motion. After all the water is added, mix until a shaggy dough forms. Press the dough together using your hands, then transfer the dough and any flour left onto a clean working surface. Knead until a smooth and elastic ball is formed, about 15 to 18 minutes. The dough should be slightly tough to touch and feel a bit tacky, but shouldn't stick to your hands.
6. Cover the mixing bowl with plastic wrap. Rest until the size doubles, about 1 hour (45 to 90 minutes depending on heat and humidity). (\*Footnote 2)

## Prepare the filling

1. While the dough is rising, make the filling. Add the pork into a medium-sized bowl and pour in the strained ginger water.
2. Add the rest of the filling ingredients except for the sesame oil and Chinese chive.
3. Beat everything together in one circular direction by hand or with a wooden spatula, until all the liquid is absorbed and the pork is streaky, 5 minutes or so.
4. Add the sesame oil and Chinese chive. Mix for another minute.
5. Cover with plastic wrap and transfer into the refrigerator until the dough is ready.

## Prepare the steamer

1. Use a piece of steamer paper to line the steamer. If you don't have steamer paper, you can cut a piece of parchment paper into a round shape, then cut a few holes through the paper.
2. If you plan to use a bamboo steamer, fill a large tray (that can fit the steamer) with 1" (2.5 cm) water. Soak the bottom of the steamer before cooking. This will prevent the steamer from scorching.
3. If you use a stainless steel steamer, prepare a clean kitchen towel and use it between the lid and the steamer. This will prevent the condensation from dripping onto the buns and affecting their rise.

## Form the buns & 2nd rise

1. Once the dough has doubled in size, punch it down with your fist. Knead with your hands until it returns to its original size, about 10 minutes.
2. Divide the dough into 2 even pieces. Transfer one piece back to the bowl and cover it with plastic wrap to prevent it from drying out.
3. Work on the other piece by rolling the dough into a long log. Cut the log into 6 even pieces, or 38 g per piece using a scale.
4. Cover the dough pieces with plastic wrap and work on one piece of dough at a time - place the dough piece cut side down. Use your palms to round the sides into a round shape.

5. Press the dough into a round disk using your palm. Start to roll it out with a rolling pin. If you're not familiar with the process, roll the dough a few times, rotate it and roll the short ends again. After a few times, start to focus on rolling out the sides so the center is thicker and the edges are thin. If you're skillful, use one hand to rotate the dough with the other hand rolling out one end until forming a round wrapper. Once done, the wrapper should be about 4.5" (11 cm) wide, with a slightly thick center and thin edges.
6. Place about 2 tablespoons of filling (or as much you can wrap) in the center of the wrapper. Make pleats by pinching a piece of the edge to itself, then folding the adjacent edge over your finger holding the pinch, then press the folded edges together. Rotate and repeat the process until all the edges are pleated. Then spin and pinch the center together to seal the bun.
7. Once done, place the buns into the lined steamer, then cover them with plastic wrap.
8. Repeat the process until you fill the steamer, making sure you leave at least 1" (2.5 cm) between the buns.
9. Place the stamer over a large pot filled with cool water. Let rise for 15 minutes, or until the size becomes a bit larger.
10. If using a regular steamer, you'll probably need to cook in 2 batches because it won't fit in all the buns. You should cook the first batch immediately after resting, while you work on the second batch.
11. If you are using a stacked bamboo steamer, you can cook all the buns at the same time. In this case, start the timer after you finish wrapping the first batch. And only let it rise for 10 minutes. Make sure the 1st batch is on the bottom and the second batch stacked on top.

## **Cook the buns**

1. Once the buns have risen, turn to high heat. Keep an eye on the steamer. Once steam starts to come out from the side, keep cooking over high heat for 15 minutes.
2. Once done, turn off the heat and let sit for 2 minutes before removing the lid.

## **Serve**

1. Serve hot with vinegar as a dipping sauce. If you want to make the dipping sauce saltier, you can add a splash of soy sauce. You can also add some chili oil to the dipping sauce if you like a spicy taste.
2. Store the leftover buns in an airtight container in the fridge for 3 days or in the freezer for 1 month.
3. You can reheat the refrigerated buns in the microwave. For best results with frozen buns, heat them up in the steamer until the buns are warmed throughout.

## **NOTES**

1. It's totally OK to reserve the minced ginger and add it to the bun filling if you like the ginger taste and do not mind the texture being a bit less smooth.
2. Resting time can vary a lot depending on the temperature and humidity of your room. If your room is hot and humid, the dough might rise very quickly. I prefer to rest the dough in a room with the AC on (if it's hot), so the dough doesn't become bubbly too fast. In winter, you can rest the dough in a sunny spot to help it rise faster.

## **NUTRITION**

Serving: 1serving, Calories: 133kcal, Carbohydrates: 20.5g, Protein: 9.4g, Fat: 1.1g, Saturated Fat: 0.3g, Cholesterol: 18mg, Sodium: 299mg, Potassium: 148mg, Fiber: 0.8g, Sugar: 0.7g, Calcium: 8mg, Iron: 2mg