

SIZZLING RICE SOUP

(Woh Bay Tong)

2 c. hot cooked short-grain white rice*
1/4 lb. medium-sized prawns in the shell
1/2 lb. Napa cabbage
1 1/2 c. oil for deep-frying
1 qt. chicken stock
1/2 c. fresh or defrosted frozen peas

Seasoning:

1/2 tsp. salt
1/2 tsp. sugar
1/2 tsp. thin soy sauce
1 tsp. cornstarch
dash of pepper

**Short-grain rice is stickier than long-grain rice, so it makes a better patty. It is, however, cooked in the same way. (See recipe for Steamed Rice in Noodles, Won Tons, and Rice chapter.)*

Serves 4

1. Press hot cooked rice into a thin layer (no more than 1/4" thick) on a baking sheet. Place in a preheated 300-degree oven for 30 minutes. Remove from the oven, turn the rice layer over (this will be easy to do as the rice will have firmed up), and return it to the oven for an additional 30 minutes. Remove from the oven, and when cool enough to handle, break into 3" pieces.
2. Shell, devein, wash, and drain prawns.
3. Dice prawns and place in a bowl. Add seasoning ingredients to prawns. Mix well.
4. Cut Napa cabbage into pieces 1" wide.
5. Heat oil in wok to 325 degrees.
6. Meanwhile, bring chicken stock to a boil. Add prawns, peas, and Napa cabbage. Return to a boil.
7. Deep-fry rice patties until golden brown (about 5 minutes). Remove and drain on paper towels.
8. Pour the hot soup into a deep serving bowl and immediately add the rice patties. Both the rice patties and the soup must be as hot as possible to produce the sizzle. If the timing isn't perfect, the soup may be reheated but the rice patties cannot. (This final step, which is quite showy, may be done at the table.) Serve at once.

Advance preparation: Rice patties may be baked 2 weeks in advance, stored in an airtight container, and refrigerated. They may also be frozen for up to 2 months.

Serving suggestion: This soup goes well with Mongolian Beef and Curried Chicken.

Chopsticks, Cleaver, and Wok
by Jennie Low, 1997