

Periplus Mini Cookbooks

*Quick & Easy*

# Vietnamese cooking



Chat Mingkwan

### Measurement Conversions

All our recipes are thoroughly tested in the Perplus Test Kitchen. Standard metric measuring cups and spoons are used throughout, and all cup and spoon measurements are level. We have used medium-sized (60 g, grade B) eggs in all recipes.

### International Measures

Volume	Lengths	Weights
1 teaspoon = 5 ml	8 mm = $\frac{1}{2}$ inch	28 g = 1 oz
1 UK/US tablespoon = 15 ml = 3 teaspoons	12 mm = $\frac{1}{2}$ inch	250 g = 8 oz
1 Australian tablespoon = 20 ml = 4 teaspoons	2.5 cm = 1 inch	500 g = 1 lb

We have used international 15 ml tablespoon measures. If you are using an Australian 20 ml tablespoon, the difference will not be noticeable for most recipes. However, for flour, cornflour or baking powder, subtract one teaspoon for each tablespoon specified.

### Cup Equivalents

$\frac{1}{4}$ cup = 60 ml = 2 fl oz	1 cup bean sprouts = 60 g
$\frac{1}{2}$ cup = 125 ml = 4 fl oz	1 cup thinly sliced carrots = 100 g
1 cup = 250 ml = 8 fl oz	1 cup thinly sliced cucumbers = 150 g
2 cups = 500 ml = 16 fl oz = 1 pint	1 cup dried prawns = 120 g
4 cups = 1 litre = 32 fl oz = 1 quart	1 cup sliced palm sugar = 200 g
	1 cup sugar = 200 g

### Oven Temperature Guide

When using convection ovens, the outside of the food may cook too quickly. As a general rule, set the oven temperature 15°C to 20°C lower than the temperature indicated in the recipe, or refer to your oven manual.	°C	°F
Low	150	300
Moderate	160	325
Med. Hot	200	400
Hot	220	425
Very Hot	230	450

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# Quick & Easy Vietnamese cooking

recipes by Chat Mingkwan



The perfect guide to exciting Vietnamese cooking, this book features 38 easy-to-prepare recipes like Fresh Salad Rolls with Chicken or Prawns, Grilled Lemongrass Beef Salad and Mango Coconut Tarts.

PERIPLUS EDITIONS  
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## Basic Vietnamese Ingredients



**Black Chinese mushrooms**, also known as *shiitake* mushrooms, are used widely in Asian cooking. The dried ones must be soaked in hot water to soften before use. The stems are removed and discarded; only the caps are used. Fresh *shiitake* mushroom stems can be eaten if the bottoms are trimmed. Porcini mushrooms may also be used. Fresh *shiitake* are available in most supermarkets.



**Coconut milk** can be bought fresh from local markets and is also available canned and in packets. It comes in varying consistencies and you will need to adjust the consistency and flavor by adding water as needed. In general, you should add 1 cup of water to 1 cup of canned or packet coconut cream to obtain thick coconut milk, and 2 cups of water to 1 cup of coconut cream to obtain thin coconut milk.



**Dried rice paper wrappers** are spring roll wrappers made from rice flour, water and salt, that are steamed and dried in the sun on bamboo racks, which leaves a crosshatched imprint. Dried rice paper wrappers must be moistened before using. Available in many Asian food markets, they will keep for many months if stored in a cool dark place.



**Chilies** have become an essential culinary item in every Asian country. The **Asian finger-length red or green chili** is moderately hot. Dried red chilies are ground to make **chili flakes** or **ground red pepper**. Tiny **bird's-eye chilies** are extremely hot. Whether sliced or minced, the chili seeds are usually removed.



**Coriander** is an indispensable herb in Vietnamese cooking. **Coriander seeds** are roasted and then ground in spice pastes. **Coriander roots** are used in the same way, while **coriander leaves** (also known as cilantro or Chinese parsley) are used as a herb and a garnish.



**Dried shrimp paste** is known as *belachan* in Malay, *trasi* in Indonesian and *kapee* in Thai. It is a dense mixture of fermented ground prawns that should be toasted before use—either wrapped in foil and dry-roasted in a pan or toasted over a gas flame on a spoon.



**Fish sauce** is made from salted, fermented fish or shrimp. Good quality fish sauce is golden brown in color and has a salty tang. It is available in bottles in most supermarkets.

**Five spice powder** is a highly aromatic blend of Sichuan pepper, cinnamon, clove, fennel and star anise, ground to a fine powder. Five spice powder is available in packets in the spice section of Asian markets and many well-stocked supermarkets.



**Galangal** is an aromatic root similar in appearance to ginger and a member of the same family. It adds a distinctive fragrance and flavor to many dishes, and many stores now sell it fresh. It can be sliced and kept sealed in the freezer for several months.

**Glutinous rice** is a type of short-grained sticky rice that is widely used in Asia. It is often used in desserts. Buy glutinous rice in the packaged grains section of supermarkets. Look for intact kernels that aren't broken, scratched, or damaged. Store rice in a cool, dry area in a sealed glass or plastic container, away from the open air and moisture. Glutinous rice comes in white or black varieties.



**Mung beans** are sold dried in packets and need to be soaked in water before use. Drain and then boil the beans in water for 5-7 minutes until tender.



**Jicama**, also known as *bangkuang* or yam bean, is a crunchy, mild tuber similar to a potato with a white interior and beige skin which peels off easily. It is excellent eaten raw with a spicy dip, and can also be cooked. Daikon radish can be used as a substitute.



**Noodles**, both fresh and dried, are widely used in Vietnamese cooking. Fine **dried rice vermicelli** or *beehoon/mifen (banh hoi)* are similar to glass noodles, but made of rice flour. **Dried glass noodles** or *tang hoon (mien* in the north and *bun tao* in the south) are translucent noodles made from mung bean starch. Both types of noodles need to be blanched with hot water before using.



**Lemongrass** is a highly aromatic herb. The tough outer layers of the stem should be peeled away and only the pale, inner part of the thick end are used.



**Palm sugar** is made from the distilled juice of various palm fruits and varies

in color from golden to dark brown. It has a rich flavor similar to dark brown sugar or maple sugar, which make good substitutes.

**Rice vinegar** is mild and faintly fragrant, and is the preferred vinegar throughout Southeast Asia. If you cannot obtain rice vinegar, use distilled white vinegar, but reduce the quantity.



**Saw-leaf herb**, also known as “long coriander,” has a long, serrated green leaf. Mint or *shiso* leaves are good substitutes.



**Star anise** is a dark brown, strongly-flavored spice that resembles an eight-pointed star. Its aroma is similar to anise or cinnamon. Store in a tightly-sealed jar in a cool, dry place.



**Tapioca pearls** are tiny beads made from cassava starch. The uncooked pearls are hard and white when dry, but turn soft and translucent when cooked. The pearls are sold in plastic packets in Asian markets.



**Thai sweet basil** has flat, green leaves with pointy tips and its stems and flowers are sometimes reddish purple. It imparts a very intense taste with a strong anise or licorice aroma. European sweet basil makes a good substitute.



**Tamarind** is the fruit of the tamarind tree and grows in a long seed pod. The dried pulp is sold in packets or jars and generally still has some seeds and pod fibers mixed in with the pulp. It is used as a souring agent in

many dishes. To obtain **tamarind juice**, soak the pulp in warm water for 5 minutes, mash well and then strain and discard the seeds and fibers.



**Vietnamese mint** or polygonum (*rau ram*) is an important Vietnamese herb known as *laksa* leaf in Singapore, Malaysia and Australia. Highly aromatic, it has a pink stem and pointed, purplish leaves, commonly used as a garnish. A combination of mint and coriander leaves (cilantro) makes a good substitute.



**Wood-ear mushrooms** have very little flavor and are added to dishes for their crunchy texture and as a meat substitute. They are sold dried in plastic packets in Asian supermarkets and come in small, crinkly sheets. Soak them in water before using. Wash well and discard any hard bits in the center of the larger pieces.

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## Vietnamese Dipping Sauce (Nuoc Cham)

3 cloves garlic, minced  
2–3 bird's-eye chilies,  
minced  
4 tablespoons lime juice  
4 tablespoons fish sauce  
50 g (1/4 cup) sugar  
4 tablespoons water  
50 g (1/2 cup) grated or  
thinly shredded carrot

1 Grind the garlic and chilies to a smooth paste in a mortar or blender, adding a little water if necessary to keep the mixture turning. Stir in the lime juice, fish sauce, sugar and water. Mix well. Transfer to a serving bowl or saucers. Garnish with the grated or thinly shredded carrot.

## Peanut Dipping Sauce

80 g (1/2 cup) roasted  
unsalted peanuts  
2 tablespoons roasted  
sesame seeds  
65 g (1/3 cup) sugar  
1 teaspoon salt  
125 ml (1/2 cup) water  
1 tablespoon butter

1 Grind the roasted peanuts and sesame seeds until fine in a mortar or blender, adding a little water if necessary to keep the mixture turning.  
2 Combine the peanuts, sesame seeds, sugar, salt and water in a pot and bring to a boil over medium heat. Cook until the mixture turns a thick, syrupy consistency, about 3–5 minutes. Remove from the heat and stir in the butter to mix well.

## Vietnamese Herb Accompaniments

1 head leafy lettuce  
1 bunch Thai sweet basil  
1 bunch mint leaves or  
saw-leaf herb  
1 bunch coriander leaves  
or dill

1 Clean and separate the lettuce into individual wrappers. Clean the herbs, trim the tough stems and separate into sprigs. Serve on the side to the main dish.

## Sweet Chili Dip

4 tablespoons rice vinegar  
3 cloves garlic, minced  
50 g (1/4 cup) sugar  
1/2 teaspoon salt  
1 teaspoon bottled chili  
sauce (purchased)  
4 tablespoons orange juice  
25 g (1/4 cup) grated or  
thinly shredded carrot

1 Combine the rice vinegar, garlic, sugar, salt, chili sauce and orange juice in a pot and heat over medium heat. Cook and stir until the mixture turns syrupy, about 3–5 minutes. Let it cool. Transfer the sauce to a bowl and garnish with the grated or thinly shredded carrot.

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# Grilled Prawn Salad Cups

4 tablespoons oil  
4 shallots, thinly sliced  
250 g (1 cup) peeled  
fresh prawn meats  
1/2 teaspoon salt  
1/4 teaspoon ground black  
pepper  
1 unripe green mango,  
peeled and thinly sliced  
to yield 80 g (1 cup)  
1 tart green apple, thinly  
sliced to yield  
80 g (1 cup)  
100 g (1 cup) grated or  
thinly shredded carrot  
5 sprigs fresh Vietnamese  
mint (laksa leaves),  
finely chopped  
5 sprigs Thai sweet basil,  
finely chopped  
2 red bird's-eye chilies,  
finely chopped  
5 sprigs coriander leaves  
1 head lettuce, washed  
and torn to form cups

## Dressing

3 cloves garlic, minced  
2–3 bird's-eye chilies,  
minced  
4 tablespoons lime juice  
5 tablespoons fish sauce  
3 tablespoons sugar  
2 tablespoons water

1 Combine all the Dressing ingredients in a bowl and stir to mix well.

2 Heat the oil in a wok or skillet over medium heat and fry the sliced shallots for about 2–3 minutes, until golden brown and crispy. Remove from the pan and drain on paper towels. Reserve the fragrant shallot oil.

3 Combine the shallot oil, prawns, salt and ground pepper in a bowl. Marinate the prawns for 30 minutes.

4 Preheat an oven broiler or grill pan to medium heat. When the grill is ready, place the prawns on the hottest part of the broiler or grill. Cook, turning occasionally, until they turn orange-pink and feel firm to the touch, about 1–2 minutes.

5 To serve, combine the sliced mangoes, apple, carrot, Vietnamese mint, basil, chilies and a little Dressing in a large bowl. Toss well.

6 Arrange the lettuce leaf cups on a serving platter. Place some of the mango salad mixture on top of each lettuce leaf cup and top with a grilled prawn. Garnish with the crispy fried shallots and coriander leaves. Serve the remaining Dressing on the side.

Serves 4–6

Preparation time: 20 mins + 30 mins marinating time

Cooking time: 20 mins





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# Grilled Lemongrass Beef Salad

1 handful (25 g/1 oz)  
dried rice vermicelli  
(*beehoon or mifen*)  
120 g (2 cups) thinly  
sliced lettuce  
150 g (1 cup) thinly  
sliced cucumber  
100 g (1 cup) grated or  
thinly shredded carrot  
200 g (4 cups) bean  
sprouts  
20 g (1/2 cup) thinly  
sliced Thai sweet basil  
20 g (1/2 cup) thinly  
sliced mint leaves

## Marinated Beef

500 g (1 lb) beef loin  
3 stalks lemongrass, ten-  
der inner part of bottom  
third only, finely minced  
3 tablespoons minced garlic  
2 tablespoons fish sauce  
2 tablespoons soy sauce  
2 tablespoons sugar  
1 teaspoon ground pepper  
2 tablespoons oil, plus  
more for brushing

## Dipping Sauce

3 cloves garlic, minced  
2–3 bird's-eye chilies,  
minced  
4 tablespoons lime juice  
5 tablespoons fish sauce  
3 tablespoons sugar  
6 tablespoons water  
40 g (1/4 cup) chopped  
roasted peanuts

1 Soak the dried rice vermicelli in water until soft,  
about 20 minutes. Drain and cut into long strands.  
Set aside.

2 To prepare the Marinated Beef, slice the beef into  
very long, thin strips. Combine all the other ingredi-  
ents in a mixing bowl and marinate the beef over-  
night or at least 1 hour at room temperature. The beef  
can be skewered on bamboo sticks.

3 Preheat the oven broiler or pan grill to medium heat.

4 Combine all the vegetables and herbs in a mixing  
bowl and set aside.

5 Combine all the Dipping Sauce ingredients in a  
mixing bowl and mix well.

6 Grill the beef under the pre-heated broiler or on a  
pan grill, turning occasionally until done, about 2–3  
minutes. Remove from the heat.

7 To serve, arrange the vegetable and herb mixture on  
a serving platter or in individual bowls and top with  
the cold noodles. Arrange the grilled beef on top of  
the noodles. Serve with bowls of the Dipping Sauce  
on the side. Ask each guest to spoon the Dipping  
Sauce over his or her portion to taste and then toss  
together to eat.

Serves 4–6

Preparation time: 45 mins + 1 hour marinating time

Cooking time: 20 mins

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## Fresh Salad Rolls with Chicken or Prawns

500 ml (2 cups) lightly salted water  
2 boneless chicken breasts, with skin removed (or 300 g/ 10 oz fresh prawns, peeled and deveined)  
1 small packet (50 g/ 2 oz) dried rice vermicelli (*beehoon* or *mifen*), soaked for 5 minutes and drained  
80 g (1<sup>1</sup>/<sub>3</sub> cups) thinly sliced lettuce  
35 g (1<sup>1</sup>/<sub>3</sub> cup) grated or thinly shredded carrot  
50 g (1<sup>1</sup>/<sub>3</sub> cup) thinly sliced cucumber  
10 g (1<sup>1</sup>/<sub>4</sub> cup) sliced mint leaves  
10 g (1<sup>1</sup>/<sub>4</sub> cup) sliced sweet basil leaves  
12 sprigs coriander leaves or dill leaves  
12 dried rice paper wrappers (20 cm/8 in across)  
1 portion Vietnamese Dipping Sauce (page 5)  
1 portion Peanut Dipping Sauce (page 5)

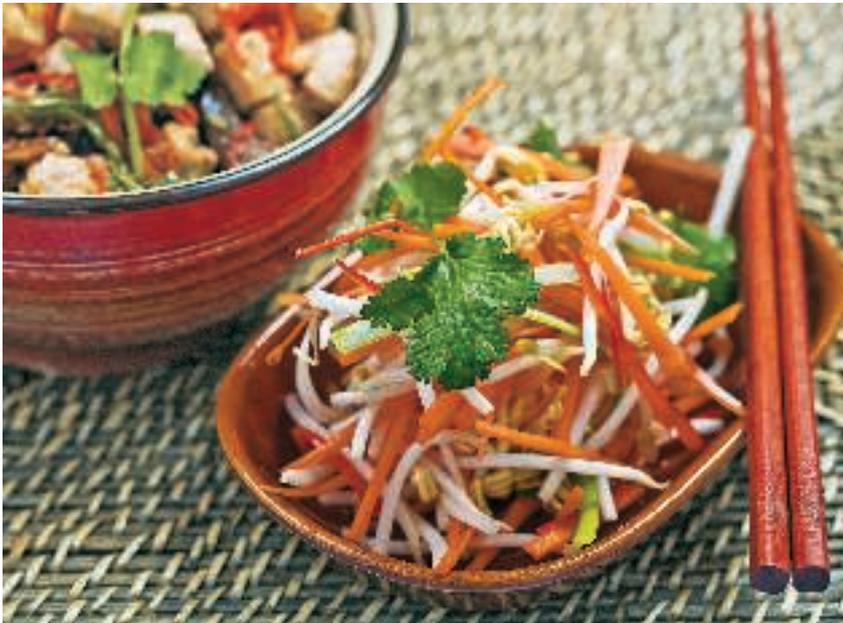
1 Prepare the Vietnamese Dipping Sauce and Peanut Dipping Sauce according to the recipes on page 5.  
2 Bring the lightly salted water to a boil in a pot. Add the chicken and poach over medium heat until done, about 15 minutes. Remove the chicken and set aside to cool. Using your hands, tear the chicken into thick shreds. (If using prawns, poach in boiling water until they turn bright pink, about 1–2 minutes. Allow to cool and cut in half lengthwise.)  
3 Add the noodles to the pot and then blanch until soft and pliable, about 2–3 minutes. Drain and rinse with cold water. Cut into long strands and set aside to drain.  
4 To make a spring roll, briefly dip a dried rice paper wrapper in a bowl of water until soft. Remove and place on a dry surface, smoothing it with your fingers. Arrange some lettuce, noodles, strips of vegetables and herbs onto the wrapper, closer to one edge. Fold the closest edge of the wrapper over the filling, then fold in the sides and roll up tightly halfway to enclose all the ingredients. Place several strips of the chicken (or prawn) in the roll and top with a sprig of coriander leaf, then continue to roll up tightly.  
5 Cut the rolls in half or serve whole. Arrange them on a serving platter with bowls of the Vietnamese Dipping Sauce and Peanut Dipping Sauce on the side.

Makes 12 rolls  
Preparation time: 30 mins  
Cooking time: 40 mins

Fold the closest edge of the wrapper over the filling.

Place several strips of the chicken (or prawn) in the roll and top with a sprig of coriander leaf.





## Carrot and Bean Sprout Salad

85 ml ( $\frac{1}{3}$  cup) rice vinegar or white vinegar  
70 g ( $\frac{1}{3}$  cup) sugar  
1 tablespoon salt  
185 ml ( $\frac{3}{4}$  cup) cold water  
1 small carrot, peeled and thinly sliced into long strips

250 g (5 cups) bean sprouts  
3 spring onions, cut into long strips  
3 red finger-length chilies, deseeded and sliced into thin strips  
3 sprigs coriander leaves  
Lime juice, to taste

Serves 4–6  
Preparation time: 15 mins  
+1 hour marinating time

- 1 Combine the vinegar, sugar, salt and water in a mixing bowl. Stir until the sugar and salt are completely dissolved to make a marinade.
- 2 Add the rest of the ingredients and marinate for at least 1 hour. Make sure the liquid cover the vegetables completely. Add more marinade if needed.
- 3 Drain the liquid and transfer the salad to a serving platter and serve as a side to other main dishes.



## Shredded Chicken Salad

1 chicken breast, poached, then shredded into thin strips  
150 g (3 cups) thinly sliced cabbage (preferably a mixture of white and red cabbage)  
100 g (1 cup) grated or thinly shredded carrot  
20 g ( $\frac{1}{2}$  cup) thinly sliced mint leaves  
2 stalks lemongrass,

tender inner part of bottom third only, finely minced  
10 g ( $\frac{1}{4}$  cup) thinly sliced Vietnamese mint (*laksa* leaves)  
3 tablespoons chopped roasted peanuts  
12 g ( $\frac{1}{4}$  cup) thinly sliced coriander leaves  
1 bag crisp prawn crackers or potato chips

### Dressing

3 tablespoons fish sauce  
2 tablespoons sugar  
1 tablespoon minced garlic  
2–3 red bird's-eye chillies, finely minced  
4 tablespoons lime juice

Serves 4–6  
Preparation time: 20 mins  
Cooking time: 15 mins

- 1 Combine all the Dressing ingredients in a mixing bowl and stir to mix well.
- 2 Combine the chicken, cabbage, carrot, lemongrass, mint leaves and Vietnamese mint in a large bowl and toss gently with the Dressing until well mixed. Transfer to a serving platter and garnish with the roasted peanuts and coriander leaves. Serve the salad with prawn crackers or potato chips on the side.



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# Fresh Salad Rolls with Marinated Beef

12 pieces dried rice paper wrappers

Handful (50 g/2 oz) dried rice vermicelli (*beehoon*), soaked until soft, drained and cut into long threads

100 g (1 cup) grated or thinly shredded carrot

150 g (1 cup) thinly sliced cucumber

65 g (1<sup>1</sup>/<sub>3</sub> cups) bean sprouts

1 portion Vietnamese Dipping Sauce (page 5)

Vietnamese Herb Accompaniments (page 5)

## Marinated Beef

350 g (11 oz) flank steak or beef sirloin

1 clove garlic, minced

2 shallots, minced

<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub> tablespoon finely minced ginger

1 tablespoon oyster sauce

1 tablespoon fish sauce

1 teaspoon cornstarch

1 teaspoon sesame oil

<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub> teaspoon ground pepper

1 Prepare the Vietnamese Dipping Sauce by following the recipe on page 5.

2 Prepare the Marinated Beef by slicing the beef into long thin strips about 6-mm (<sup>1</sup>/<sub>4</sub>-in) thick. Combine with the rest of the ingredients and marinate the beef overnight or at least 3 hours in the refrigerator.

3 Heat a skillet or grill pan over high heat. Make sure that the pan is hot and then cook the Marinated Beef, stirring occasionally, until done, about 3–4 minutes.

4 To make a spring roll, briefly dip a dried rice paper wrapper in a bowl of water until soft. Remove and place on a dry surface, smoothing it with your fingers.

Arrange a few noodles on the wrapper, closer to one edge, and top with some carrot, cucumber and bean sprouts. Arrange strips of the beef on top as shown.

Fold the closest edge of the wrapper over the filling, then fold in the sides and roll up tightly. Repeat until all the ingredients are used up.

5 Arrange the spring rolls, either sliced into segments or whole, on a serving platter and serve with bowls of the Vietnamese Dipping Sauce and Vietnamese Herb Accompaniments on the side. To eat, place a piece of the Spring Roll on a piece of lettuce and top with herbs of your choice. Wrap the lettuce around the contents and dip in the Vietnamese Dipping Sauce.

Makes 12 rolls

Preparation time: 40 mins + marinating time

Cooking time: 25 mins

Arrange strips of the beef on top of all the ingredients.

Fold the closest edge of the wrapper over the filling, then fold in the sides and roll up tightly.



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# Steamed Rice Cakes with Pork and Prawns

1 red finger-length chili, deseeded and cut into very thin strips, to garnish  
1 spring onion, thinly sliced, to garnish  
1 portion Vietnamese Dipping Sauce (page 5)  
Vietnamese Herb Accompaniments (page 5)

## Batter

165 g (1<sup>1</sup>/<sub>3</sub> cups) rice flour  
1 tablespoon cornstarch  
1 tablespoon sugar  
1 teaspoon salt  
500 ml (2 cups) chicken stock or water  
12 small ceramic saucers or ramekins, 5 cm (2 in) in diameter

## Topping

2 tablespoons oil  
3 shallots, thinly sliced  
1 shallot, minced  
150 g (2<sup>2</sup>/<sub>3</sub> cup) chopped fresh prawn meat  
100 g (4 oz) ground pork  
1 tablespoon fish sauce  
1 tablespoon oyster sauce  
2 tablespoons black bean sauce  
1 tablespoon sugar  
1/2 teaspoon ground white pepper

1 Prepare the Vietnamese Dipping Sauce by following the recipe on page 5.

2 To make the Topping, heat the oil in a pan over medium heat and fry the sliced shallots for about 2–3 minutes, until golden brown and crispy. Remove from the pan and drain on paper towels. Set aside.

3 In the same pan, add the minced shallot and fry until light brown, about 1–2 minutes. Stir in the prawn meat and pork. Cook until the prawns and pork are done, about 2–3 minutes. Add the rest of the ingredients. Stir to mix well and remove from the heat.

4 To make the Batter, combine the rice flour, cornstarch, sugar and salt in a large bowl. Slowly pour in the stock or water and mix thoroughly.

5 Arrange the saucers in a steaming rack placed over a steamer pot filled with water. Bring the water to a boil and heat the saucers first until fully hot, about 5 minutes. Stir the Batter and pour it into the saucers almost to the rims. Continue steaming until the Batter is cooked and firm, about 7–8 minutes. Remove from the heat and allow to cool.

6 To serve, run a thin blade around the saucers to loosen the cakes and transfer to a microwave-safe plate. Heat the cakes and Topping separately to lukewarm in a microwave. Arrange the cakes on a serving platter and spoon the Topping on top of each cake. Sprinkle with the crispy fried shallots, sliced red chilies and spring onions. Serve with bowls of the Vietnamese Dipping sauce and Vietnamese Herb Accompaniments on the side. To eat, place a cake on a piece of lettuce and top with herbs of your choice. Wrap the lettuce around the cake and dip in the Dipping Sauce.

Serves 4–6

Preparation time: 15 mins

Cooking time: 40 mins

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# Pork and Prawn Dumplings

1 portion Vietnamese Dipping Sauce (page 5)  
4 tablespoons oil  
4 shallots, sliced  
2–3 large lettuce or cabbage leaves  
Vietnamese Herb Accompaniments (page 5)

## Dough

300 g (2 cups) cornstarch  
75 g (1/2 cup) plain flour  
250 ml (1 cup) boiling hot water

## Filling

2 tablespoons oil  
250 g (8 oz) ground pork  
60 g (1/2 cup) dried prawns  
225 g (1 1/2 cups) fresh or canned bamboo shoots, thinly sliced into matchsticks  
2 spring onions, thinly sliced  
1 tablespoon sugar  
1 tablespoon oyster sauce  
1 tablespoon fish sauce  
1/4 teaspoon ground white pepper

Serves 4–6

Preparation time: 40 mins  
+ 20 mins standing time

Cooking time: 20 mins

1 Make the Vietnamese Dipping Sauce by following the recipe on page 5.

2 To make the Filling, heat the oil in a wok or skillet over medium heat and stir in the pork, dried prawns and bamboo shoots. Cook until the pork is done about 3–5 minutes. Add in the rest of the ingredients. Stir to mix well, then remove from the heat. Set aside to let it cool.

3 Make the Dough by sifting the cornstarch and plain flour into a mixing bowl. Make a well in the center and pour in the hot water. Gently mix the contents with a wooden spoon to combine well. When it is cool enough to handle with bare hands, knead the mixture into a smooth Dough. Cover the Dough with a kitchen towel and let stand for 20 minutes.

4 Heat the oil in a wok or skillet over medium heat and fry the sliced shallots for about 2–3 minutes, until golden brown and crispy. Remove from the pan and drain on paper towels. Reserve the oil.

5 Divide the Dough into 2-cm (3/4-in) round balls. Knead and press the balls into thin round wrappers, about 8 cm (3 in) in diameter.

6 Place a heaping tablespoon of the Filling on each wrapper and fold it into a half circle. Pinch the edges to seal completely. Repeat the process until all the Dough and Filling are used up.

7 Arrange the lettuce or cabbage leaves on a steaming rack and brush with the shallot oil. Arrange the dumplings on top of the leaves, leaving some space between each dumpling. Brush the dumplings with the shallot oil and steam over boiling water until done, about 10–12 minutes.

8 Transfer to a serving platter and garnish with the crispy fried shallots. Serve the dumplings with Vietnamese Dipping Sauce and Vietnamese Herb Accompaniments. Eat a dumpling on a piece of lettuce with herbs of your choice. Wrap the lettuce around the dumpling and dip in the Sauce.



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## Crispy Fried Wontons

12 frozen spring roll wrappers or square wonton wrappers (each 20 cm/8 in across), thawed  
375 g (1½ cups) chopped fresh prawn meat  
150 g (5 oz) ground pork  
1 onion, minced  
1 spring onion, green part only, minced  
1 egg, white and yolk separated  
1 tablespoon fish sauce  
1 tablespoon sugar  
½ teaspoon ground white pepper  
Oil for deep-frying  
1 portion Vietnamese Dipping Sauce (page 5)  
Vietnamese Herb Accompaniments (page 5)

Makes 12 wontons  
Preparation time: 40 mins  
Cooking time: 30 mins

1 Prepare the Vietnamese Dipping Sauce by following the recipe on page 5.

2 Combine the prawns, pork, onion, spring onion, egg white, fish sauce, sugar and ground pepper in a large bowl. Mix vigorously with your hands until the texture is lightly stiff, about 3–4 minutes.

3 Gently separate the wrappers and cut each wrapper into triangles. Spread the prawn mixture thinly on each triangle, leaving small gaps (1 cm/¾ in) around the edges. Beat the egg yolk lightly and dab it around the edges of the wrapper. Place another triangular wrapper on top and press the edges to seal completely. Repeat the process with all the prawn mixture to make more wontons.

4 Heat the oil in a wok or deep saucepan over medium heat until hot. Gently lower the wontons into the oil, a few at a time, and deep-fry for 2–3 minutes each side, until golden brown and crispy on all sides. Remove and drain on paper towels.

5 Serve the fried wontons with the Vietnamese Dipping Sauce and Vietnamese Herb Accompaniments. To eat, place a wonton in a piece of lettuce and top with herbs of your choice. Wrap the lettuce around the wonton and dip in the Sauce.





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