

Bok Choy 101

From Farm to Table: Cooking with Bok Choy



The word “choy” is Cantonese, and literally translated means “cooking greens.” Bok choy (also spelled pak choi) grows in large, loose heads with wide, crisp white stalks and dark green leaves. The leaves have a cabbage flavour, but it’s the stalks that become creamy and tender when cooked.

How to store:

The leaves and stems should be fresh and crisp. Cut off any yellow leaves. Store wrapped loosely in plastic bag (or a green bag) in the refrigerator.

Best Uses:

Roasted whole

Soup

Stir fries

Slaws

Salad

Deep Fried

Kimchi

Vegetable chow mein

Grilled whole

Noodle Bowl

Rice Bowl

Dumplings



Preparing Bok Choy:

Wash and removed any damaged, yellowing leaves. Cut off the root tip — about an inch's worth. If the stems are thick, cut the leaves from the stems and cook them separately a few minutes before you add the leaves. Bok choy is done when the stems are tender but still a bit crisp, and the leaves have wilted.

How to Freeze Bok Choy:

Bok choy must be blanched before freezing.

Rinse leaves under cool water. Cut the stems from the leaves and chop to desired size. Store those separately.

Cut the leaves into ribbons or squares or keep whole. Store separately from stems. Bring salted pot of water to a boil. Boil the leaves in boiling pot of water for 90 seconds.

Douse in ice water to stop the cooking process. Drain the leaves and squeeze out moisture. Place in Ziploc freezer bags based on your portions you plan to use, and remove as much air as possible. Put in freezer.

Blanch the stems separately for 2 minutes. Douse in ice water and drain before packing into separate Ziplocks. Date your bag.

4 Ways to Cook Bok Choy:

Grilled: Preheat an outdoor grill for medium-high heat, and lightly oil the grate. Cut bok choy in half or quarters. You may drizzle with oil if you like before you grill, but it isn't necessary. Grill each side about 5 minutes. You may also drizzle with soy sauce or teriyaki sauce or some other seasoning sauce after grilling.

Steamed: Place the bok choy (whole or cut into smaller pieces) in a steamer basket and place the basket over a pot of simmering water with a lid on. Steam until the base of the bok choy is just tender when pierced with the tip of a knife, about 6 minutes. Transfer the bok choy to a platter and drizzle with preferred sauce and condiments.

Roasted: Preheat oven to 450°F. Halve the bok choy lengthwise, and toss it in salt, pepper, and olive oil. Roast the choy cut side down on a foil-lined baking sheet for 10 minutes, then flip it and roast 5 minutes more.

Braised: Bring 1 cup broth and 3 T.


HOW TO FREEZE BOK CHOY



Take moist paper towel and wash off leaves. Dry well.



Cut stems and leaves into pieces.



Place in freezer bag. Lay flat and out all the air. Seal. Date the bag.

butter to a simmer
in a deep large heavy skillet. Arrange bok
choy evenly
in skillet and simmer, covered, until
tender, about 5
minutes. Transfer bok choy with tongs to
a serving dish
and keep warm, covered. Boil broth
mixture until
reduced to about 1/4 cup, then stir in 1/2
t. sesame oil
and pepper to taste. Pour mixture over
bok choy.

Pairs well with:

Ginger, garlic, soy sauce, chicken, green onions, sesame seeds, coconut milk, bacon, mushrooms, oyster sauce, hoisin, shrimp, miso, peanuts, tofu.

Substitutes:

Napa cabbage, Chinese cabbage, white chard (although the flavor will be different, but the stems are similar in texture), broccoli raab, kale.

Suggested Recipes:

Spicy Roasted Bok Choy

Adapted from www.TheWheatlessKitchen.com

Ingredients:

- 1 large head of bok choy
- 2 T. olive oil
- 2 t. sesame oil
- 2 T soy sauce)
- 2 cloves garlic, minced
- 2 t. red pepper flakes (less if you don't want it too spicy)

2 t. sesame seeds

Directions:

Preheat oven to 400 degrees. Cut the bok choy into quarters lengthwise. In a small bowl, whisk together the rest of the ingredients.

Place bok choy on a large baking sheet and pour the marinade all over the wedges. Gently rub the bok choy with your fingers to make sure the marinade gets under some of those layers. Roast for 6-7 minutes, until wilted and tender-crisp.

Bok Choy Slaw with Sesame Dressing

Adapted from www.CulinaryHill.com

Ingredients:

FOR THE SESAME DRESSING:

1/4 cup light brown sugar

1/4 cup olive oil

2 tablespoons red wine vinegar

2 tablespoons toasted sesame seeds

1 tablespoon soy sauce

FOR THE BOK CHOY SALAD:

2 tablespoons olive oil

1 package ramen noodles, crumbled, seasoning packet discarded

1/3 cup sliced almonds

1 bunch bok choy, sliced

5 scallions, chopped

Directions:

To make the dressing, in a small bowl or in a jar with a tight-fitting lid, combine brown sugar, olive oil, vinegar, sesame seeds, and soy sauce. Allow flavors to blend at room temperature while preparing the rest of the salad.

Meanwhile, heat 2 tablespoons olive oil in a large sauce pan over medium heat until shimmering. Reduce heat to low. Add ramen noodles and almonds; sauté until toasted,

about 10 minutes, stirring frequently to avoid scorching.

In a large bowl, combine baby bok choy, scallions, and crunchy mix. Drizzle salad dressing over the top and toss until uniformly combined. Serve at room temperature.

Stir Fried Bok Choy with Spicy Soy Sauce

Recipe adapted from Food and Wine, June 2014

This super simple bok choy stir-fry incorporates a little spicy chili garlic sauce into the soy sauce for a great kick. Total time required: about 15 minutes. Makes 2 to 4 servings.

Ingredients:

1 pound bok choy, leaves and stems separated, leaves coarsely chopped and stems sliced diagonally

1 T grapeseed or canola oil (or other high flashpoint oil)

1 T grated or minced fresh ginger

1 T soy sauce

1 T chili garlic sauce

1/2 t toasted sesame seed oil

Directions:

Heat a large skillet or wok over medium-high heat. Add the oil and then add the ginger. Cook the ginger for about 1 minute, or until light golden and fragrant.

Stir in the bok choy stems, soy sauce, chili garlic sauce, and sesame seed oil. Stir and toss for 1-2 minutes or until the stems are crisp-tender. Stir in the leaves briefly until wilted.

Serve warm.

Bok Choy Salad with Asian Ginger Salad

Dressing *Adapted from www.eatthehealthyeathappy.com*

Dressing Ingredients:

1" piece fresh ginger, peeled and quartered

2 medium garlic cloves, peeled

2 T. seasoned or regular rice vinegar or white wine vinegar

1 T. Dijon mustard

1 T. lemon juice

1 tsp soy sauce

1/4 c sesame oil (olive oil works too)

pinch red pepper flakes

Salad:

1/2 head bok choy, leaves torn and whites sliced on a diagonal

5 green onions, chopped (stems too)

3 mini bell peppers or 1 smallish bell pepper, sliced

1 carrot, shaved with veggie peeler

1/4 c plain roasted peanuts, crushed (for topping)

Directions:

To make the dressing, combine all the dressing ingredients in a food processor or power blender and puree completely smooth.

Combine all the salad ingredients and toss. Top with dressing and peanuts. Makes 2 large salads.

Ginger Bok Choy Soup with Noodles

Adapted from www.NaturallyElla.com

Ingredients:

1 tablespoon olive oil

1/3 bunch scallions

3 cloves garlic minced

2 tablespoons minced fresh ginger

2 cups low-sodium vegetable broth

2 cups water

1 head bok choy

4 ounces ramen noodles (or rice noodle)

Salt if desired

Sesame Seeds for topping

Red Pepper Flakes for topping

Directions:

In a stock pot, heat olive oil over medium-low heat. Trim the ends off the scallions and chop up the light green stem. Save the dark green tops for topping. Next, add the scallions to the pot with the garlic and ginger. Cook, stirring occasionally for 2 to 3 minutes until the garlic and ginger is fragrant.

Pour in the vegetable broth and water. Bring to a boil, reduce to a simmer, and cook for 5 minutes.

While broth is simmering, cut the end off the head of bok choy. Cut off the stems and then cut the stems into thin strips. Roll the leaves together and also cut into strips.

Add the stems to the broth and cook for 5 minutes or until stems are starting to be tender. Follow with the leaves and cook for another 5 minutes more. Finally, stir in the ramen and simmer soup until the noodles and bok choy are tender, 4 to 6 minutes. Taste and add salt as needed.

Divide soup into two bowls. Then top with chopped scallion greens, sesame seeds, and red pepper flakes.

Sheet Pan Meal: Teriyaki Salmon and Bok Choy with Sesame and Scallions

Adapted from Sylvia Fountaine from Feasting at Home Blog

Ingredients:

8 ounces salmon (thick pieces)

2-4 baby bok choy cut into quarters or eights - 1/2 inch - 3/4 inch thick at widest point.

4 ounces shiitake mushrooms (optional)

1/4 cup soy sauce

1/4 cup Mirin

1 tablespoon sesame oil

1 teaspoon honey (optional)

1 teaspoon grated fresh ginger

Pinch salt and pepper

Toasted Sesame seeds

scallions, sliced thinly

sriracha

Directions:

Preheat oven to 350F.

Place the salmon, bok choy and mushrooms on a parchment lined baking sheet.

Mix marinade ingredients (soy, mirin, sesame oil, honey and ginger) together in a small bowl and spoon it over the fish and veggies, coating all sides well.

Sprinkle the salmon with a pinch of salt and pepper and a little fresh orange zest, then place the sheet pan in the oven, checking it after 10 minutes. Depending on how thick or thin the salmon is, it may be done, or need a few more minutes. Remove the salmon from pan.

Continue baking bok choy a few more minutes, until the bok choy is just tender (yet green and vibrant and crisp). Sprinkle the bowl with toasted sesame seeds, scallions, and chili flakes or sriracha for heat. Serve with rice.

Crisp Bok Choy Greens in Sesame-Soy

Vinaigrette *Adapted from www.TheCozyApron.com*

Salad ingredients: (serves 4)

1 large bok choy, rinsed and dried then thinly sliced (including leafy greens)

1/2 cup shredded carrot

1 tablespoon toasted sesame seeds, for garnish

Sesame-Soy Vinaigrette ingredients:

1 clove fresh garlic, pressed through garlic press

2 teaspoons toasted sesame seeds

1 tablespoon honey

1 tablespoon low-sodium soy sauce

3 tablespoons rice wine vinegar

1 tablespoon toasted sesame oil

4 tablespoons vegetable oil

Directions:

Place sliced Bok Choy and carrot into a large bowl and into refrigerator while vinaigrette is prepared.

In a small bowl, add all of the vinaigrette ingredients and whisk together until well combined.

Pour the vinaigrette over the Bok Choy greens and carrot, toss together well to coat, and divide equally among plates, piling the greens high; sprinkle with about a teaspoon of the sesame seeds to garnish.

Simple Asian Glazed Chicken Thighs with Bok Choy *Adapted from www.CafeDelites.com*

Ingredients:

6 chicken thighs (bone in and skin on)

1/3 cup rice wine vinegar

1/4 cup soy sauce

3 tablespoons honey

2 tablespoons brown sugar (or coconut sugar)

2 tablespoons pure sesame oil

4 cloves garlic, crushed

1 teaspoon crushed ginger (fresh)

1 big bunch of bok choy (quartered horizontally)

sliced green onions/shallots

Directions:

Preheat oven to 425°F

Wash chicken thighs and pat dry with a paper towel.

Whisk the vinegar, soy sauce, honey, brown sugar, sesame oil, garlic and ginger together in a small saucepan over medium heat. Bring to a rolling boil; reduce heat to low and allow to simmer for about 5 minutes while stirring occasionally until sauce thickens. Take off heat and allow to cool slightly.

Place chicken thighs into an oven proof pan/skillet or baking dish. Pour $\frac{2}{3}$ of the sauce mixture over the chicken, rotating each thigh until evenly covered. Rotate the chicken to be skin side down, and bake for 30 minutes. Turn thighs and continue to bake until beginning to brown on the skin (about another 15 minutes). At this point, start steaming your bok choy to your desired texture (crunchy, soft, etc).

Change oven settings to grill/broil on medium heat and grill until the skin changes to deep golden in color (about 5 minutes).

Allow chicken to rest for 10 minutes. Serve with the steamed bok choy, shallots/green onion slices and remaining sauce.