MYANMAR

SHAN NOODLES

Shan noodles, khao swe, are flat rice noodles tossed with a garlicky tomato and chicken sauce, crushed peanuts and pickled greens. They come from Shan State in eastern Myanmar and are eaten at markets around Inle Lake.



SERVES	PREP	COOK	TOTAL	DIFFICULTY	SPICE
4	20 min	30 min	50 min	Easy	Medium

INGREDIENTS

FOR THE CHICKEN SAUCE

- 400 g boneless chicken thighs, cut into small pieces
- 4 tbsp neutral oil
- 6 garlic cloves, finely chopped
- 2 shallots, finely chopped
- 4 ripe tomatoes, chopped
- 1 tsp sweet paprika
- 1 tsp chilli flakes
- 2 tbsp light soy sauce
- 1 tbsp fish sauce
- 1 tsp sugar
- 150 ml chicken stock

FOR THE BOWLS

- 400 g flat rice noodles (fresh, or 250 g dried)
- 60 g roasted peanuts, crushed
- 100 g bean sprouts
- 2 spring onions, sliced
- Coriander leaves
- 100 g pickled mustard greens, chopped
- Garlic oil, to drizzle
- Chilli oil, to serve
- 1 lime, cut into wedges

METHOD

MAKE THE SAUCE

1. Heat the oil in a wok or pan over medium heat. Fry the garlic and shallots for 2 to 3 minutes, until golden. Spoon out half for garnish.
2. Turn the heat up, add the chicken and stir-fry for 3 to 4 minutes, until it changes colour.
3. Add the tomatoes, paprika and chilli flakes. Cook for 5 minutes, until the tomatoes break down.

4 Season with the soy sauce, fish sauce and sugar, pour in the stock and simmer for 10 to 15 minutes, until the sauce is thick and the oil comes to the top.

COOK THE NOODLES

5 Cook the noodles following the packet, drain well and toss with a little garlic oil so they do not stick.

6 Blanch the bean sprouts in the same water for 20 seconds and drain.

BUILD THE BOWLS

7 Divide the noodles between bowls. Spoon the chicken sauce over the top.

8 Scatter with peanuts, bean sprouts, spring onion, coriander and the fried garlic and shallots.

9 Serve with pickled mustard greens, chilli oil and lime. Mix everything together at the table.

USEFUL SHORTCUTS FOR HOME COOKS

For the soup version, serve the noodles in hot chicken stock and add the sauce on top.

Pickled mustard greens are sold in packs in Asian shops; kimchi or a quick pickle of cabbage, vinegar and salt also works.

The sauce keeps for 3 days in the fridge, so it makes a quick weekday lunch.

Will travels to Inle Lake in Shan State, in the hills of eastern Myanmar. Fishermen row standing on one leg, boats carry produce through the floating gardens, and the villages around the water hold busy morning markets.At one market stall a cook builds bowls of Shan noodles one by one: flat rice noodles, a spoon of tomato and chicken sauce,...