



# KUNG PAO CHICKEN

My Heavily Modified, Yet Incredibly Delicious Twist on a Savory and Spicy Take-Out Favorite

Kung Pao Chicken is, by far, one of the most popular Chinese dishes in the USA. It is known for its savoriness, along with having enough heat to make Chuck Norris' beard sweat.

My recipe is a **HEAVILY** tweaked combination of a traditional Sichuan recipe and the Kung Pao chicken from PF Chang's. In an attempt to keep this dish as accessible as possible, while still keeping the flavors as true to the original as I can, I'm using some pretty interesting ingredient swaps. Just roll with it... they are all explained in the notes at the end of the recipe.

## Ingredients:

### Chicken & Marinade:

- 2 pounds boneless skinless chicken breast, or chicken breast tenderloins, cut into 1/2 inch chunks.
- 1 tsp fresh ginger, finely minced
- 4-5 medium garlic cloves, crushed and minced
- 2 Tbsp reduced sodium soy sauce
- 1 Tbsp white wine (see notes)
- 2 tsp 0 point sweetener o' choice
- 1/2 tsp baking soda, mixed with 2 tsp water.

### Sauce:

- 1/4 cup chicken broth
- 1-1/2 tsp balsamic vinegar (just do it.... see notes)
- 1 tsp rice vinegar
- 3 Tbsp soy sauce
- 1 Tbsp **DARK** soy sauce (see notes)
- 1 tsp sesame oil
- 1-1/2 to 2 Tbsp asian chili sauce (like 'Huy Fong' brand)
- 1 Tbsp no sugar added ketchup, or tomato sauce (*for color*)
- 2 tsp paprika (*for color, trust me, see the notes*)
- 1 Tbsp cornstarch, dissolved in 1 Tbsp water

### Additional Ingredients:

- 1 large red bell pepper, sliced into bite sized squares
- 4 large celery ribs, sliced on a bias, about 1/4" thick
- 1/4 cup scallions (white part of green onions), sliced into 1/4 inch rounds. (*pictured in step 1C*)
- 1/3 cup dry roasted peanuts, halved ... (*SEE NOTES*)
- 1 tsp sesame seeds, for garnish

## Servings Info.:

Yields: 7 cups

Servings: 5

Serving Size: 1-1/4 cup

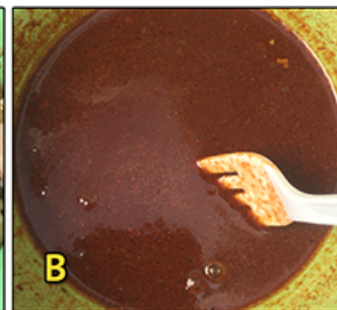
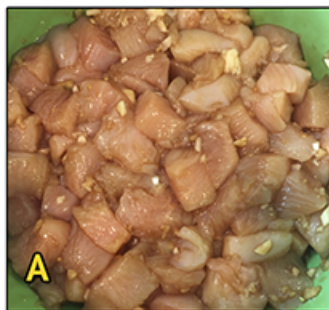


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Use your mobile device's 'Camera' App to look at this code for nutritional info.

## Directions:



1. **(A)** Mix chicken pieces with the marinade ingredients, let sit for 20 minutes. **(B)** Meanwhile, in a separate bowl, mix together the sauce ingredients, till smooth. Set aside. **(C)** Cut celery, red bell peppers, and slice the bottom 1/2 of the green onions into 1/4" slices. Set aside. **(D)** Preheat a LARGE pan (or wok) over high heat for 45 seconds. Spray with cooking spray, then quickly add the chicken and marinade into the pan. Cook over high heat until the chicken is just cooked through, about 5 minutes. Once the chicken is cooked through, take the chicken out of the pan, set aside. Return the pan to heat.





2. **(A)** Spray the hot pan with cooking spray and immediately add the bell peppers, celery and sliced scallions. Cook over High heat until just starting to get a little color, but are still firm, about 3-4 minutes. Add the peanuts and toss to combine. **(B)** Add the chicken and juices back into the pan, toss to combine. **(C)** Pour the sauce into the pan, which should still be set to high heat. Begin stirring and tossing the contents, to distribute the sauce. **(D)** The sauce will begin to thicken quickly. Continue to toss/mix for around 2-3 minutes, or until the sauce thickens to the consistency of a thick gravy, coating the dish. Done. You can garnish with thin sliced green onions and up to 7/8 tsp of sesame seeds for 0 points, if desired.

## NOTES CONT.:

- **WHITE WINE??:** Traditional recipes call for using Chinese 'Shaoxing' cooking wine. I'm not going to make you go hunt down a bottle of it. Use regular white wine, it still tastes fine with the substitution.
- **BALSAMIC!?:** Again, traditional recipes call for using 'Chinking' vinegar. Nope. An easy substitution for it is mixing a little balsamic with a little rice vinegar. Every grocery store has those. I'm trying to make this easy on'ya.
- **PAPRIKA & KETCHUP??:** I'm sounding like a broken record at this point. In order to get a dark, deep reddish color for the sauce, true recipes get that from cooking lots of those dried little red Asian chiles in hot oil, then cooking the dish in the oil filled with disintegrated red chili peppers. In order to get that color without the chiles and without food coloring... we're stirring some paprika and ketchup into our sauce. Once combined with the Asian chili sauce and the dark soy sauce, it gives a very deep, rich red color.
- **WHERE ARE THE PEPPERS?:** I am NOT going to tell you all to go find an Asian market and buy miniature, dried Asian chile peppers for this dish. That's why I'm using Asian chile sauce for the heat in my recipe. It's at every store and it's incredibly easy to adjust your level of heat. However... if you want to go full-tilt traditional, replace the chile sauce with 8-10 dried asian chile peppers and add 2 teaspoons of whole Sichuan peppercorns. That'll melt your face off.
- **PEANUT HALVES?:** We're using 1/3 cup of roasted peanuts, which is around 56 whole peanuts. But, so they could spread through as much of the dish as possible, I chose to use peanuts that were split in half, rather than whole peanuts. Yeah, it took a couple minutes to split each peanut into 2 halves, but it's worth it. That way, instead of only having around 56 whole peanuts spread out through the entire dish, I had 112 peanut halves.
- **SPICE LEVEL:** Kung Pao chicken is supposed to be pretty spicy. My recipe uses 1-1/2 to 2 Tbsp of Asian chili sauce. HOWEVER... that's because I had to eat it. Both my wife and I have the heat tolerance of 4 year old French kids, so... feel free to add more chili sauce than I recommend. You can make this dish as spicy or as mild as you want, because even without heat, it's a really tasty dish.

