

Char Siu Buns

by Chef Payal Thakurani



Serves: 4 px

Preparation time: 48 hours (marinating) + 2 hours (bao preparation & proofing)

Cooking time: 1 hour 10 minutes

INGREDIENTS

1 kg	Pork belly		Hungary	
2,5 tablespoon	Sierra de Segura		Spain	
200 g	Mushrooms		Netherlands	
300 g	Wheat flour		Italy	
1.5 tablespoons	Bardejovský Med / Med z Bardejova		Slovakia	
1 teaspoon	Sel de Guérande		France	
1 tablespoons	Light soy sauce		Local	
1 tablespoons	Shaoxing wine		Local	
1	Garlic		Local	
1/2 tablespoon	Ginger		Local	
1 teaspoon	Dark soy sauce		Local	
1/2 teaspoon	Sesame oil		Local	
1 teaspoon	Five Spice Powder		Local	
1,5 tablespoon	Molasses		Local	
1,5 tablespoon	Hoisin sauce		Local	
1 teaspoon	Dried yeast		Local	
1 teaspoon	Sugar		Local	
to taste	Chili oil		Local	
250 g	Cha Siu		Local	
4 tablespoons	Water		Local	
1,5 teaspoon	Oyster sauce		Local	
1 tablespoon	Cornstarch		Local	
5	Shallots		Local	
1 tablespoon	Maltose		Local	



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PREPARATION

Preparing the pork

1. Combine the marinade ingredients in a bowl. Stir well. Set aside 1/3 of the marinade for glaze. Rub the pork strips with the rest of the marinade. Cover and marinate (in the fridge) for 48 hours, turning them after the first 24 hours.
2. Roasting: Pre-heat oven to 180°C. Prepare roasting pan – line the base of the pan with aluminum foil. Place a rack in the pan. Remove marinated pork from the marinade and set them nicely on the rack. Pour some water into the pan, make sure that it does not touch the meat. Place the pan into the pre-heated oven and cook for 30 minutes. Meanwhile, in a small saucepan, mix reserve 1/3 of the marinade with maltose. Bring to the boil and thicken – set aside. Remove the pan from the oven. Turn the oven function to 'BROIL'. Once the oven reaches the broil temperature, generously brush it with the glaze, and put the pan in to broil for 8 minutes. Turn over the pork and repeat the glazing procedure and broil again for 5-7 more minutes, until slightly charred. Take pan out of the oven after the final round of broiling. Let the cha siu rest for 10-15 minutes before slicing/dicing.

Preparing the cha siu filling

1. Dice 250g cha siu and set aside. Peel and dice shallots.
2. Heat up 1.5 tablespoons oil in a saucepan. Add diced shallots and fry till caramelized. Add cha siu and cook for about 5 minutes.
3. Next deglaze with all seasonings, and stir to mix.
4. Mix cornstarch with water. Stir and add to the cha siu mixture. Turn off heat once mixture thickens. Cool before using.

Cooking Instructions

1. Mix flour, yeast, sugar, salt, and oil in a bowl. Pour in water gradually while mixing. Combine and knead with your hands until a very smooth dough comes together.
2. Cover the bowl with a damp tea towel and leave it to rise in a warm place until double in size (It may take between 40 minutes to 1.5 hours depending on the room's temperature).
3. Punch down the dough and knead until it is super smooth inside with very few air bubbles left inside. This will ensure even rising of buns during the second proof.
4. Roll into an even log and then cut it into 12 equal portions. Roll each piece into a disk-like wrapper about 10cm in diameter, making sure the edges are thinner than the center.
5. Place about 2 tablespoons filling in

the middle of a wrapper then pleat into a bao shape. Hold the bun on your left hand, hold a corner of the edge between the index finger and thumb of your right hand. Create pleats using your left hand and pinch them using your right hand. Continue doing this all the way around. One important note is that your thumb never leaves the first pleat. In the end, you twist and seal to create a tiny hole on top for steam to rise.

6. Leave all the assembled buns to rest for another 15 minutes in a parchment-lined bamboo steamer. Leave about 2cm of space in between the buns and from the walls of the steamer, to give the buns room to expand.

Steam the buns

1. Place the buns inside the steamer starting with cold water over high heat. Turn the heat down to medium-low when the water starts boiling.
2. Cook for about 15 minutes. Turn off the heat, then open the lid ever so slightly and let the steam out for a few minutes before serving. This will ensure the buns don't shrink due to sudden change in temperature. Serve with chili oil.

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