

Peking-style Pork, Chicken, and Winter Squash Stir-fry

One of the great things about utilizing a stir-fry technique is that the composition can vary by the season, what's on sale, whatever bits and bobs you might have in the vegetable drawer of your refrigerator; or any combination of the above. When fall comes along and brings with it winter squash, it becomes an anticipated addition to whatever other seasonal veg are available. If you prefer a vegetarian version, just omit the pork and chicken. Instead of a jar of prepared hoisin sauce, which is usually thinly veiled high fructose corn syrup or sugar, try this delicious and easy from scratch version of my [hoisin sauce](#). I like to serve this with some simply steamed Jasmine rice flavored with some cinnamon. Follow the directions for preparing your rice, or your favorite recipe, and add stick of cinnamon in with the rice as it cooks. As we build several different but related flavor profiles to create depth from this dish, the subtle addition of cinnamon adds one more satisfying layer of complexity.



Ingredients:

- $\frac{1}{2}$ kg (approximately 1- $1\frac{1}{4}$ pounds) pound pork and chicken, cut into bite size pieces and trimmed of silver skin and excess fat
- 2 tsp [Chinese 5 Spice](#)
- 250 mL (~1 cup) Shio Koji*
- 1 tsp salt
- $\frac{1}{2}$ tsp fresh ground pepper
- 3 small to medium delicata squash, halved and seeds and pulp removed
- 1 Tablespoon neutral oil
- 2 teaspoons [pumpkin pie spice](#)
- 1 kg (approximately 2- $2\frac{1}{4}$) pounds) mixed, sliced vegetables like Napa cabbage, Bok choy, green beans, carrots, celery, or green onion, and leafy greens like spinach, kale, or Swiss chard. Separate the sliced mixed vegetables from the leafy vegetables.
- 250 gm (approximately 8-9 ounces) of vegetables like green peas, beans, or corn kernels
- 2 cloves garlic, minced
- 25 gm (approximately 1 ounce) minced ginger

- 2 Tablespoons soy sauce
- 50 gm (approximately $\frac{1}{4}$ cup) [hoisin sauce](#)
- 125 mL (approximately $\frac{1}{2}$ cup) cold water
- 2 Tablespoons toasted sesame oil
- 1 Tablespoon cornstarch
- 3 tablespoons grapeseed or other neutral oil, divided

Directions:

Place the pork and chicken in a container. Add the Shio Koji, Chinese 5 spice, salt, and pepper. Allow to marinate at least 4 hours, preferably overnight.

Pre-heat an oven to 425 degrees F. Drizzle the squash halves with 1 tablespoon of neutral oil and then sprinkle with pumpkin pie spice. Lightly season with salt and pepper. Remove the stem end of the squash halves then place cut side down on a lightly greased, foiled baking sheet. Allow to bake for approximately 30 minutes, until a paring knife easily penetrates the skin of the squash. Remove, cool, and slice.

In a medium bowl, mix the soy sauce, hoisin sauce, sesame oil, cornstarch, and water. Combine well and set aside.

The above steps can be done ahead of time.

In a wok or 12-inch skillet over high, heat 1 tablespoon of the neutral oil until barely smoking. Add the chicken and pork, in small batches if needed, and cook without stirring for about 2 minutes or until they easily release from the pan. Cook the remaining side another 2 minutes and remove.

Add another tablespoon of oil and add the mixed, sliced vegetables. Stir and cook until tender and slightly charred, approximately 4 minutes. Add the ginger and garlic and cook another minute. Remove and set aside.

Add another tablespoon of oil and add the 250 gm of

vegetables. Stir and cook until tender, approximately 2 minutes. Add the leafy greens and cook another 2 minutes, until wilted through. Remove and set aside.

Return the skillet to medium-high and add the hoisin and cornstarch mixture, scraping up any browned bits. Add the chicken and pork, bringing to a simmer. Continue to mix and remove when the sauce thickens approximately 3-5 minutes. Remove from the heat into a large serving bowl and add the remaining vegetables. Fold thoroughly to mix and coat. Season as needed with salt and pepper.

*If you do not have access to shio koji, you can make a marinade of 125 mL sake (or white wine), 50 mL mirin, 25 mL soy sauce, and 25 mL rice wine vinegar. If you use this, omit the additional salt.