

London Cookery School Dim Sum Class A

Yum Cha is Drinking Tea and always incorporates eating Dim Sum

Tea is at the heart of dim sum. You will often just be given the house tea when you arrive but you can ask what teas they have and choose your own. Most offer at least 3 of the following.

- 1. Bo-lei**, popular with the Chinese for its ability to aid in the digestion of rich food. Strong fermented black tea from Yunnan.
- 2. Jasmine**, fragrant green tea. Light fermentation, before roasting and rolling.
- 3. Wulong**, also known as oolong. Part fermented, clear, fragrant like a green tea, strong and refreshing like a black tea.
- 4. Sol-mei**, a type of white tea. Gentle, unfermented tea, high in antioxidants
- 5. Tie-guan-yin**, another type of oolong.
- 6. Long Jeng**, (Dragon Well) A popular green tea.

Tip: To indicate you're ready for a refill, just leave the lid ajar

Etiquette: Pour your dining companion's tea before your own.

Do: Know how to show appreciation. If someone serves you tea, tap the table with your pointer and middle finger as a gesture of thanks.

Do: Gather a few people to go Yum Cha with. It is a social experience and having a few companions along means you can try more things!

Do: Try to pace yourself. Dim sum is all about variety and sharing, but the dumplings and buns can be surprisingly filling.

Don't: Save dessert for last. There's no set order to eating dim sum, so go ahead and grab those egg tarts or sticky-rice sesame balls.

Do: Stick to your culinary comfort zone if you're not adventurous enough for chicken feet, or tripe or any number of delicacies found at Dim Sum restaurants.

Do: If in a trolley restaurant, take note of the trolleys that come straight out of the kitchen. They'll have the freshest tidbits, and don't be shy about chasing down one of the cart ladies. Just bring your table's tally card to have it stamped.

Don't: point at people with chopsticks.

Do: Leave a tip on your table. A standard 10 to 12 percent tip is customary. Most restaurants automatically add a service charge so do check first.

Don't: Stick chopsticks into rice or other food so that it sticks up. It looks like incense offerings to the dead.

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Do: Use communal chopsticks for picking things up e.g. a shared noodle dish. Or use the other end of your chopsticks to handle communal food.

MAKING YOUR OWN DIM SUM

EQUIPMENT: Steamer, small diameter rolling pin, pastry cutting ring

LETS GET MAKING!

HAR GOW 蝦餃 (Prawn Dumplings)

These are dainty parcels of steamed prawn dumplings. It takes some practice to get the correct texture and thickness for the skin. It should be thin enough so that its not too chewy or doughy, but thick enough so that it doesn't break easily when steaming, or when you try to pick it up to eat!

Ingredients:

Filling

- | | | |
|----|--|--------------|
| A. | Raw King Prawn (deveined and shelled) .. | 80 gram |
| | Water Chestnut, finely chopped | 1 tsp |
| | Ginger, finely chopped | 1/4 tsp |
| B. | Salt | 1/3 tsp |
| | Sugar | 1 tsp |
| | Cornflour | 1 tsp |
| | White Pepper (CAREFUL!) | a tiny pinch |

Dough

- | | | |
|----|---------------------|---------|
| A. | Wheat starch | 30 g |
| | Tapioca flour | 20 g |
| | Corn flour | 20 g |
| | Sugar | 1/2 tsp |
| | Salt | a pinch |
| | Boiling water | 60 g |
| B. | Vegetable oil | 1 tsp |

Method:

Making the Prawn Paste

1. Add A and B and mix thoroughly.

Making the Dough and Har Gow

1. Put all the dry ingredients into a small plastic bowl.
2. Add the boiling water & mix rapidly with a spoon for 15-20 seconds, then cover for 2 minutes to 'cook' the flour
3. Add 1 tsp vegetable oil and knead to form soft dough.
4. Divide the dough into 10 equal portions.
5. Flatten each dough and roll into 3 inch circles, add filling, fold and pleat.
6. Steam for 8 minutes over high heat.

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Chiu Chow Fun Gwor 潮州粉果 (Chiu Chow Steamed Dumplings)

Ingredients:

Filling

- | | | |
|----|---|---------------|
| A. | Minced Pork (20% fat if available) | 60 gram |
| | Baking powder (CAFEFUL!) | 1/4 tsp |
| B. | Salted radish (finely chopped) | 1/2 tsp |
| | Chinese Mushroom (finely chopped) | 1 tsp |
| | Sugar | 1 tsp |
| | Light Soy | 1 tsp |
| | Sesame Oil | 1 tsp |
| | White Pepper (CAREFUL!) | a pinch |
| C. | Cornflour | 2 teaspoons |
| | Cold Water | 2 Tablespoons |

Dough (this uses same dough as for Har Gow)

- | | | |
|----|---------------------|---------|
| A. | Wheat starch | 30 g |
| | Tapioca flour | 20 g |
| | Corn flour | 20 g |
| | Sugar | 1/2 tsp |
| | Salt | a pinch |
| | Boiling water | 60 g |
| B. | Vegetable oil | 1 tsp |

Method:

Making the Dough

1. Put all the dry ingredients into a small plastic bowl.
2. Add the boiling water & mix rapidly with a spoon for 15-20 seconds, then cover for 2 minutes to 'cook' the flour
3. Add 1 tsp vegetable oil and knead to form soft dough.
4. Divide the dough into 10 equal portions.

Method:

Making the Filling

1. Mix A first (ideally)
2. Add B and C and mix.

Method:

Making the Chui Chow Fun Gwor

1. Flatten each dough and roll into 3 inch circles, add filling, fold and seal the edges. The traditional shape for this is a half moon shape.
2. Steam for 8 minutes over high heat.

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SUI MAI 燒賣 (Open top Pork Dumplings)

Sui Mai and Har Gow are the two most popular, most ordered Dim Sum in the World!

Ingredients:

Filling

- | | | |
|----|--|---------------|
| A. | Minced Pork (20% fat if available) | 60 gram |
| | Prawn (minced) | 10 gram |
| | Chinese Mushroom (finely chopped) | 1 tsp |
| | Baking powder (CAREFUL!) | 1/4 tsp |
| B. | Salt | 1/4 tsp |
| | Sugar | 1/3 tsp |
| | Cornflour | 1 tsp |
| | White Pepper (CAREFUL!) | a small pinch |
| | vegetable oil | 1 tsp |

Dough

- | | | |
|----|-----------------------|---------------------------------|
| A. | Egg | 1 medium |
| | Salt | 3/4 tsp |
| | All-purpose flour | 2 cups |
| | Water | 1/3 to 1/2 cup water, as needed |
| | Extra flour as needed | |

Method:

Making the Dough

1. Lightly beat the egg with the salt. Add 1/4 cup water.
2. Add flour to bowl. Make a well in the middle and add the egg and water mixture and mix.
3. Add as much of the remaining water as necessary to form a dough. Add more water gradually if the dough is too dry).
4. Knead until it forms a smooth dough. (about 5 mins)
5. Cover and let rest for 30 minutes. Turn the dough out onto a lightly floured surface. Roll out until very thin, and cut into 3 1/2-inch circles. Store in a plastic bag in the refrigerator or freezer until ready to use.

Making the Sui Mai Paste

1. Combine all of (A) and (B) and mix well.
2. Gather into a ball and throw hard into bowl until it forms a paste (2 mins)
3. place a good heaped teaspoon of filling in the centre of your sui mai skin. Form a circle with thumb and forefinger. Place Sui Mai skin with the filling on top of your circle and push down to make a cup shape. Rotate and squeeze to compact the meat down.
4. Steam for 8 minutes over high heat.

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Additional Notes

Steaming: the timings above are for cooking times. Turn on your steamer until it is boiling. Then add the Dim Sum to steam and start timing. Always check inside one to ensure it is fully cooked before eating.

If you would like to make Dim Sum and eat it later in the day, put them in a deep metal baking pan making sure to add a thin layer of oil the bottom of the pan first so that it doesn't stick. Place all the made Dim Sum inside, and cover with a damp cloth (Make sure cloth only touches the edges of the pan and not the Dim Sum)

If you would like to freeze Dim Sum, again make sure to oil the bottom of the pan / tray first, then add the Dim Sum, then freeze. Once frozen (approx 45 mins) you can gather up all the dim Sum, put it in a bag and back in the freezer to save space.

When cooking from frozen, roughly double the cooking time. So give it at least 13-15 mins. If cooking in several stacked layers always check one from the top layer to see if it is cooked.

Your equipment will vary so the timings are for a guide only. The cardinal rule of cooking applies – cook till its cooked. Always check before serving. Once you have the timings worked out for your particular steamer, then you can use those timings for future cooking.

Preserved salted radish can be found in Chinese Supermarkets. give them a quick rinse before using. These are the magical ingredient that adds another dimension to dishes.

Dried Chinese Mushrooms need to be reconstituted before use.

Give them a quick rinse first.

Then place them in a saucepan and pour freshly boiled water over them. Keep them submerged with a plate or saucer. They will soak up quite a lot of water so ensure there is enough water. Leave them to soak for at least an hour before use.

When ready for use, grab an handful of mushrooms and squeeze out the excess water. Then they can be chopped as needed.

You can retain the mushroom water and use it as mushroom stock - for cooking with, or making into a broth for noodles.

Stems are great to use but if a part if it is still hard after a long soak, cut the hard bits off and discard.

Dough and Wrappers are made quite a bit thinner in restaurants compared to the ones we made in class. For example, the amount of dough we made in our recipe would be enough to make about 20-24 Dim Sum.

(In comparison we cut into 10 balls, but after using these up and the scraps we probably made about 14-16 Dim Sum)

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Sui Mai Wrappers can be made following the recipe given but can be bought instead for convenience. If you can't find them, Wonton wrappers are similar so you can substitute these instead. Wonton wrappers are square so you can make them round by using your pastry cutter.

Wheat Starch is different to wheat flour or other types of strong flour. It is a high gluten flour which gives the dough extra elasticity and stretch, whilst retaining strength.

Please refer to photo of the packet of starch used in class.

Food Processors can be used if you are making in quantity. It works especially well for the salted radish and Chinese mushrooms. Cut into smaller pieces first before processing. If there are some harder stems in the mushrooms, cut them a bit smaller and then process first for a while. Then add the rest of the mushrooms and whizz again.

Be extra gentle with the raw prawns and don't process it too much. It is good to have some bigger pieces and some smaller pieces. (More interesting texture when eating). Don't have it processed so much that it becomes a homogenous paste.



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VEGETARIAN FILLINGS

There is a wide variety of vegetarian fillings that work really well with making Dim Sum.

The key is getting a good combination of textures, flavours and colours.

Many types of mushrooms are now commonly available in oriental supermarket that add so much flavour and texture.

Eg: Oyster, Shiitake, Enoki, Eryngii, Chestnut

Other key ingredients that work really well:

Chinese Leaf
Pak Choi
Chinese Chives
Bell Peppers
Grated Carrot
Asparagus
Green Beans
Deep Fried Tofu
Bamboo shoots
Baby Corn

Following on from recipes in the class, instead of adding the meat component, it is good to substitute with a mixture of different vegetarian ingredients.

Eg, instead of 60g of pork, it is good to choose 3 vegetarian ingredients and have 20g of each one.

A sample recipe would be:

20g chinese leaf
20g asparagus
20g of oyster mushrooms

NOTE: Adjust the amount of cornflour so that the mixture sticks nicely together.

NOTE: For vegetarian fillings, baking powder should be omitted.

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HAR GOW 蝦餃 (Prawn Dumplings)

Vegetarian Ingredients:

Filling

A.	Deep fried Tofu, (finely chopped)	20 gram
	Asparagus, (finely chopped)	20 gram
	Bamboo shoots, (finely chopped)	20 gram
	Shiitake Mushroom, (finely chopped)	20 gram
	Ginger, (finely grated)	a pinch
	Water chestnut, (finely chopped)	1 teaspoon

Seasoning - the same as the meat recipe

SUI MAI 燒賣 (Open top Pork Dumplings)

Vegetarian Ingredients:

Filling

A.	Red bell peppers (finely chopped)	20 gram
	Carrot (finely grated)	20 gram
	Oyster Mushrooms (finely chopped)	20 gram

Seasoning - the same as the meat recipe

For this recipe, omit the baking powder.

Chiu Chow Fun Gwor 潮州粉果 (Chiu Chow Steamed Dumplings)

Vegetarian Ingredients:

Filling

A.	Chinese Leaf (finely chopped)	20 gram
	Green Peppers (finely chopped)	20 gram
	Chestnut Mushrooms (finely chopped)	20 gram

For this recipe, omit the 2 tablespoons of water, and baking powder.

Seasoning - the same as the meat recipe

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Some Recommended Restaurants for Dim Sum

London Chinatown:

Golden Dragon

Imperial China

Joy King Lau

Docklands:

Yi-Ban

If you enjoyed the Dim Sum Class A, join us for

**Dim Sum Class B : Char Sui Buns and Emerald
Dumplings!**

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