

Cooking Beef ... with Ashley



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Happy New Year! A new year holds the promise of new beginnings and exciting opportunities. When presented with the challenge of creating a New Year's resolution, there are many things that come to mind. Should I strive to be more healthy? More active? More thoughtful and understanding? More focused in my career? There are so many possibilities that I decided to incorporate them all into one blanket statement- I want to be a better person. This past year has shown me that I should constantly be thankful for my health and the blessings that I have in my life because they can very quickly be taken away.

As I work towards my challenge, I have to remember to keep a balance. Being healthy can be a chore, but if you make food that is flavorful and delicious, it can be something that you and your family look forward to enjoying. That being said, small indulgences can definitely be a part of a healthy lifestyle! Spicy Beef "Fortune Cookies" are small, fried beef-filled wontons that are perfect for any New Year's get together you may be hosting or attending.

Personally, I am not very familiar with cooking Asian ingredients, but I love eating them! When I saw this recipe, the miso paste was the scary ingredient, especially when I couldn't locate it in the grocery store. I have since learned that black bean paste or soy sauce are great substitutes since they are all fermented bean products. Also, if you have never worked with wonton wrappers before, don't worry because they are so easy! As long as you do not get them wet, they will stay malleable and will not stick together. While they will dry out eventually, don't worry about this too much as you assemble your fortune cookies.

I wish you all good fortunes and a very Happy New Year! □



BEEF: It's What's
For Dinner

Spicy Beef "Fortune Cookies"

Prep time: 30 mins Cook Time: 3 minutes per batch Servings Makes 12 cookies

Ingredients

| | |
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| 1 lb 80% lean ground beef | ¼ tsp cayenne pepper |
| 3 green onions, finely minced | 1 tsp salt |
| 6 garlic cloves, finely minced | 1 tsp black pepper |
| 2 Tbsp brown miso paste (or black bean paste) | 2 Tbsp all-purpose flour |
| 1 Tbsp soy sauce | 12 (8-in) spring roll or egg roll wrappers |
| 1 (1-in) piece fresh ginger, peeled and grated | 6 cups peanut oil |
| | 12 paper strips with fortunes |
| | Sweet and sour sauce or sweet chili sauce |

Instructions:

1. Mix together ground beef, green onions, garlic, miso, soy sauce, ginger, cayenne, salt and pepper in a large bowl. Whisk flour and 3 Tbsp water in a small bowl; set aside.
2. Lay spring roll wrappers on work surface. Cut 12 rounds with a 4-inch round cookie cutter. Place rounds on a baking sheet and cover with a damp kitchen towel to keep the wrappers from drying out.
3. Place 1 ½ Tbsp of beef mixture just below center of each of the rounds. Dip your finger into the flour paste, and moisten the outer edge of each wrapper. Fold the top over and press the edges together to make a seal, making a half-moon shape. Bend tips of the half-moon together so they meet to make a fortune cookie shape. Transfer to a baking sheet, and repeat with the remaining filling and wrappers.
4. Heat oil to 350° in a large pot over medium heat. Fry a few fortune cookies at a time for 3-4 minutes, turning often with a slotted spoon until they are golden brown. Drain on paper towels. Insert a paper fortune into each one, and serve with sweet and sour or sweet chili sauce as a dipping sauce.

Notes:

1. Miso paste and black bean paste can be found in the ethnic aisle of your local supermarket. If these ingredients cannot be found, you can substitute with additional soy sauce.
2. When using fresh ginger, scrape the root with a spoon to peel off the skin then use a fine cheese grater or microplane to grate. I would use fresh ginger if at all possible since the flavor is much more pungent than ground ginger, but if you need to substitute, use ½ tsp ground ginger.