

Sweet & Sour Chicken

When I was first introduced to Chinese food as a child in Manchester's Chinatown this was the first dish I tried. A bright fluorescent red sauce, crispy chicken and chunks of pineapple. I remember thinking to myself, chicken and pineapple, what the!!

Needless to say, my first impressions of this dish did not put me off and I've loved it ever since that rainy day in Manchester. And whenever I walk through Manchester's Chinatown I see that very same restaurant, and it's not changed one bit.



Serves: 5

Prep Time: 15 minutes

Rest/Marinate Time: 0

Cooking Time: 1 hour 30 minutes

Ingredients

- 750 g of boneless & skinless chicken thighs, caught into bite-size pieces.
- 1 white onion, cut into wedges then separate into onion petals.
- 1 red pepper, cut into chunks.
- 1 yellow pepper, cut into chunks.
- 200 g tin of pineapple chunks, reserve the juice.
- 150 g of plain flour.
- 50 g of cornflour.
- 1 pinch of Chinese five-spice.
- Sunflower oil, for deep frying.

Marinade Ingredients

- 3 tbsps of light soy sauce.
- 2 tbsps of toasted sesame oil.
- 1 tbsp of golden caster sugar.

Sauce Ingredients

- 10 tbsps of Ketchup.
- 7 tbsps of malt vinegar.
- 1 tbsp of toasted sesame oil.
- 2 tbsps of dark brown sugar.
- 2 tbsps of dark soy sauce.
- 2 tbsps of pineapple juice.

Method

- Place the chicken into a large bowl or Tupperware along with the marinade ingredients, season with salt and pepper. Mix well, cover and leave to marinate for 1 hour or as long as possible. Once the chicken has marinated add the plain flour, the cornflour, the five-spice and a pinch of salt. Mix well making sure you coat all the chicken pieces.
- Take a large high sided frying pan or wok pour in around 2 cm of the oil. Heat to 170°C or you could use a deep-fryer, set at the same temperature. If you don't have a thermometer to check the temperature of your oil, just take a little piece of the coated chicken and place it in the oil. If it starts to sizzle and turns a light

golden colour within a minute the oil is ready. Shake off the excess flour and fry the chicken in batches for around 4-5 minutes till beautifully golden and crispy. If you want to check if it's ready just carefully remove a piece of chicken from the pan, cut it in half and check its cooked. When the chicken is ready drain on some kitchen paper and keep warm in a very low oven.

- While the chicken is cooking take all the sauce ingredients along with a pinch of salt and combine. Then place to one side.
- When you have cooked all the chicken empty the frying pan or wok, wipe it clean or use a new pan, then pour in a drizzle of oil. Stir-fry the peppers and onions for around 4 minutes or till they just slightly start to get soft, then add the pineapple and give it another minute. Now add the chicken to the veg, pour in the sauce and cook for a couple of minutes so the sauce reduces slightly and heats up. Do this in batches if need be.
- Sprinkle with some sesame seeds and serve with rice.