



Mostly Mushroom Chinese Bao Buns with Happy Hoisin Dipping Sauce

By Erin Fletter

Prep Time 30 / **Cook Time** 18 / **Serves** 4 - 6

Fun-Da-Mentals Kitchen Skills

chop: to cut something into small, rough pieces using a blade.

grate: to reduce food, like a carrot, to very small shreds or pieces of the same size by rubbing it on a tool with an outside surface that has holes with cutting edges (a grater).

knead: to work dough by pushing, pulling, and folding it by hand or with a stand mixer.

sauté: to cook or brown food in a pan containing a small quantity of butter, oil, or other fat.

separate eggs: to remove the egg yolk from the egg white by cracking an egg in the middle and using the shell halves, the palm of the hand, or a device to keep the egg yolk in place while the egg white falls into a separate bowl.

squeeze: to firmly press or twist a food with fingers, hands, or a device to remove its liquid, like shredded potatoes, frozen and thawed spinach, or tofu.

steam: to cook food by heating it in the steam from boiling water.

combine: to merge two or more ingredients into one mixture, like a batter of flour, eggs, and milk.

Equipment

- Skillet
- Large pot
- Bamboo steamer + lid (or large pot + lid + chopsticks for bottom)
- Mixing bowls
- Dry measuring cups
- Measuring spoons

- Liquid measuring cup
- Cutting board
- Kid-safe knife
- Grater
- Wooden spoon

Ingredients

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- Bao dough:
 - 2 C all-purpose flour **** (for CELIAC/GLUTEN ALLERGY sub 2 C gluten-free/nut-free all-purpose flour)****
 - 1 T apple cider vinegar
 - 1 tsp baking soda
 - 2 T granulated sugar
 - 1/2 tsp salt
 - 1/2 C water + more for steaming buns
 - 1 egg white **** (for EGG ALLERGY sub 1 T ground flaxseeds + 3 T water, stirred)****
 - 3 tsp butter, softened **** (for DAIRY ALLERGY sub 3 tsp dairy-free/nut-free butter)****
- Bao filling:
 - 1/4 lb mushrooms (your choice of type)
 - 1 green onion
 - 1 inch piece of fresh ginger root for 2 T grated ginger
 - 1/2 tsp salt
 - 1 tsp granulated sugar
 - 1 tsp hoisin sauce **** (for CELIAC/GLUTEN/SOY ALLERGY sub 1 tsp coconut aminos)****
 - 1 tsp soy sauce **** (for CELIAC/GLUTEN/SOY ALLERGY sub 1 tsp coconut aminos)****
- Dipping sauce:
 - 2 T hoisin **** (for CELIAC/GLUTEN/SOY ALLERGY sub 2 T coconut aminos)****
 - 2 T soy sauce **** (for CELIAC/GLUTEN/SOY ALLERGY sub 2 T coconut aminos)****

☐ 1 T apple cider vinegar

☐ 1 T honey

Food Allergen Substitutions

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Celiac/Gluten/Wheat: For 2 C all-purpose flour, substitute 2 C gluten-free/nut-free all-purpose flour.

Egg: For 1 egg white, substitute 1 T ground flaxseeds + 3 T water. Stir well.

Dairy: For 3 tsp butter, substitute 3 tsp dairy-free/nut-free butter.

Celiac/Gluten/Soy: For 2 T + 1 tsp hoisin sauce, substitute 2 T + 1 tsp coconut aminos. For 2 T + 1 tsp soy sauce, substitute 2 T + 1 tsp coconut aminos.

Instructions

Mostly Mushroom Chinese Bao Buns with Happy Hoisin Dipping Sauce

combine + mix

Have your kids combine **2 cups flour**, **2 tablespoons sugar**, **1/2 teaspoon salt**, and **1 teaspoon baking soda** in a large bowl. Mix in **3 tablespoons of room temperature butter** and stir until well incorporated.

separate + reserve

Crack and separate **1 egg**. You can crack the egg into your hand and allow the egg white to slip through your fingers into a small bowl. Reserve the egg white for the next step. You can either discard the egg yolk or save it for a different recipe. Wash your hands.

mix + knead + roll

In a separate small bowl, have kids mix together **1 tablespoon apple cider vinegar**, **1/2 cup water**, and **1 egg white**. Add the wet mixture to the flour mixture, then have kids knead until the dough comes together and is smooth. Roll the smooth dough into a thick log shape, roughly 1 1/2 inches in diameter.

grate + chop

Prepare the filling. Have kids grate a **1 inch piece of ginger root**, then chop **1 green onion** and **1/4 pound mushrooms** into tiny bits.

sauté + squeeze

Sauté **2 tablespoons grated ginger** and the **chopped veggies** for 3 minutes in a little oil in a skillet, then drain any liquid (and squeeze water out of the mushrooms as best you can), and put the veggies in a medium bowl.

measure + mix

Have kids measure and add **1/2 teaspoon salt**, **1 teaspoon hoisin sauce**, and **1 teaspoon soy sauce** to the same bowl as the veggies and mix thoroughly. Set the filling aside.

flatten + pinch

Have each kid take about 2 tablespoons of the dough and flatten it into a disk. Next, they can spoon a dollop of mushroom filling into the center of their disk, pulling the edges up around the filling and pinching them together to form a bun. Have kids continue this process with the rest of the dough until all of the buns are filled. Count to 10 in Cantonese while making the bao buns: 1 jāt (yuht), 2 jih (yee), 3 saàm (sahm), 4 sei (say), 5 ngh (nnn), 6 luhk (lohk), 7 chāt (taht), 8 baat (baht), 9 gáu (gah-OH), 10 sahp (sahp).

steam

To steam the buns, prepare your bamboo steamer basket, pour **2 cups of water** into your largest pot (or if not using a basket, lay chop sticks in the bottom of the pot), and place the buns in the basket or on the chop sticks in the pot. Place the basket, with lid on, on top of the pot, making sure the water is below the bottom of the basket. Bring the water in the pot to a boil (cover the pot with lid if not using a steamer basket). Working in batches, position the filled buns into the steamer or pot, allowing room on all sides. (The steamed buns will expand to 50 percent larger!) Place the buns seam-side down so they will have a smooth, round top. Steam the buns for 15 minutes, then remove the pot and basket from the heat. Let sit for 5 minutes before removing the lid, then serve immediately. To reheat the buns (they will keep for a few days in the refrigerator), pop in the microwave for 30 seconds or re-steam.

grate + whisk

While the Bao Buns are steaming, have kids make the Hoisin Dipping Sauce. Mix **2 tablespoons hoisin sauce**, **2 tablespoons soy sauce**, **1 tablespoon apple cider vinegar**, and **1 tablespoon honey**. Whisk together! Dip the Bao Buns in the sauce and eat! "Maahn máahn sihk" (Mahn mahn sihk) or "Enjoy your meal" (literally, "eat slowly") in

Featured Ingredient: Mushrooms!

Hi! I'm Toady! I'm a Mushroom!

"I'm also a fun guy! Get it? Fun guy—fungi? I'm good in salads, sandwiches, soups, stews, on pizza, with pasta, and stuffed with other yummy foods. Plus, you can cook and use me in recipes just like you would meat!"

History

The first mushrooms were thought to be cultivated in Southeast Asia, but it is not known why for sure. Perhaps someone discovered that mushrooms grew by accident and sought out a growing method.

All mushrooms are fungi, but not all fungi are mushrooms! There are an estimated 1.5 to 2 million species of fungi on planet Earth, of which only 80,000 have been properly identified. There are over 250 kinds of mushrooms that people eat.

Mushrooms are a kind of fungus that look like umbrellas! They grow in places like yards, forests, fields, and gardens.

What is a fungus? It's a kind of living organism that is different from plants. In fact, mushrooms are more like humans than plants!

Fungi walls are made of a fibrous substance called "chitin," rather than cellulose, like plants. Also, plants produce their own energy from the sun from photosynthesis, but mushrooms and other fungi don't need the sun for energy!

Many fungi eat by breaking down dead plants. However, other fungi feast on dead animals, bird droppings, manure, wallpaper paste, fruit, and living animals. So fungi are like nature's cleanup crew!

The yeast that makes bread rise is a type of fungi.

Mushrooms are sometimes called Toadstools! Can you picture a toad sitting on top of a giant mushroom?

Some mushrooms are good to eat, like portobellos, crimini, and shiitakes, while others are extremely poisonous. Never eat a mushroom you find growing outside unless you are with a mushroom expert!

The Honey Mushroom in the Blue Mountains of Oregon is the world's largest living thing. It is actually a mushroom colony and is believed to be at least 2,000 years old! It covers almost four square miles!

Some mushrooms live entirely underwater.

In the Amazon rainforest, mushrooms release spores into the air, which creates the surface for water to condense and can trigger rain. The rain then causes more fungi to grow.

Before the invention of colorful synthetic dyes, people used mushrooms for dyeing wool and other natural fibers.

Greek warriors ate mushrooms to increase their strength before battle.

Mushrooms are one of the vegetable world's substitutes for meat.

Anatomy & Etymology

The largest mushroom you'll find in most grocery stores is the portobello. It is the fully grown version of the *Agaricus Bisporus* species and has a large, brown cap. Smaller, immature mushrooms may be brown, like the cremini, or white, like the button.

Mushrooms contain more than 90 percent water!

Some mushrooms glow in the dark! They produce light through a process called bioluminescence. People used to carry these in ancient times to light their way through the forest.

Mushrooms can grow super fast. Once they break through the surface of whatever they're growing on, they can double their size in just one day.

The word "mushroom" comes from late Middle English for any fungus with a fleshy and fruiting body. It is derived from the Old French "mousseron," from the late Latin "mussirio."

How to Pick, Buy, & Eat

Wild mushrooms can be found in many wooded areas. If you choose to harvest wild mushrooms, make certain you have a professional identify your pick. Many mushrooms may resemble safe mushrooms but are actually poisonous!

Buy mushrooms with whole, intact caps, and be sure they are not wet or slimy!

They will smell strong, sweet, and earthy when fresh.

Rinse mushrooms before you slice or cut them. Whole mushrooms won't absorb much water, while cut mushrooms will. Wait to rinse mushrooms until right before you cook them; otherwise, they'll turn slimy. Mushrooms can be broiled, sautéed, and grilled. Mushrooms can be chopped or sliced and added to other dishes. Portobello caps are large enough to eat like a hamburger on a bun!

The mushroom cap is most often the part that is cooked and eaten. The stem can be fibrous and woody but will add flavor to vegetable or meat stock.

Mushrooms pair well with balsamic vinegar, fresh herbs (like oregano, rosemary, thyme, and cilantro), marinara, spinach, leafy greens, tomatoes, goat cheese, mozzarella, cream-based sauces, garlic, and onions.

Store mushrooms in a partially closed resealable plastic bag to ensure air circulation without drying out the mushrooms.

Nutrition

Mushrooms are low in calories and are an excellent source of B vitamins. These vitamins are needed for healthy cell and brain function, and they help prevent cancer and stress.

Even though mushrooms don't use the sun for energy, they use it to produce vitamin D, just like humans do! Vitamin D is essential to our bones! It keeps them strong and regenerating.

Mushrooms have essential minerals such as selenium, copper, phosphorus, zinc, and potassium. Copper helps the body build red blood cells and is necessary for the health of our bones. Selenium is an antioxidant that may decrease cancer risk.

Mushrooms have been used successfully in traditional Chinese medicine for thousands of years to treat many health conditions. Western medicine is finally beginning to recognize and utilize some of the medicine mushrooms naturally contain.