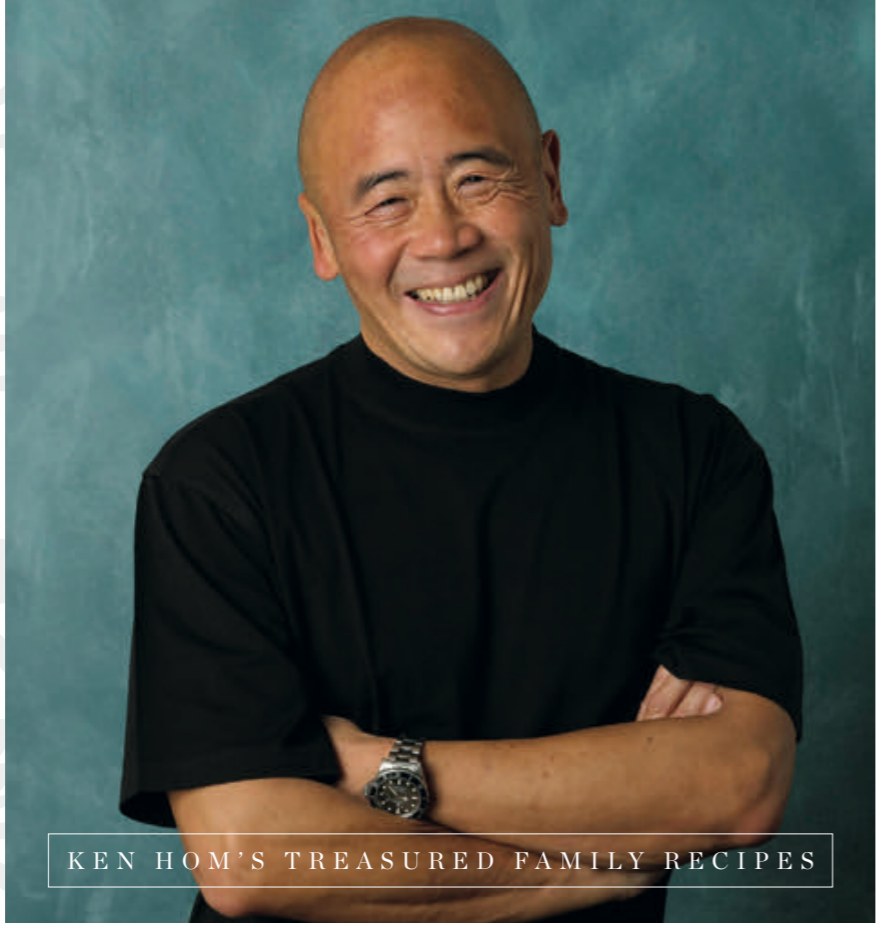


新年快樂



KEN HOM'S TREASURED FAMILY RECIPES

A feast to celebrate the good things in life

Health, prosperity, longevity and the sharing of great food are the linchpins around which the Chinese New Year celebrations revolve. In 2020 the day of feasting falls on 25 January, the start of the lunar year, and it's the best reason to cook a menu from a legend

“The Chinese New Year celebration was the biggest holiday in my family. We'd pay the traditional homage to our ancestors by burning incense at the small family altar that stood at one end of the living room. My job was to rub honey or sugar water over the kitchen god poster on the kitchen wall so he could report only sweet and good things to the Jade Emperor in heaven. Then the New Year's food preparation would begin.

At the New Year table, certain foods were always served because they symbolise particular good and noteworthy aspirations. Fish, which represents abundance and good fortune, was essential. Chicken, a symbol of fortune, was served because what good are abundance and good fortune without the time to enjoy them? My mother, being a good and faithful Buddhist, always served apples, symbolic of peace, which is what she wished for us and the world.”

CHEF KEN HOM →

THE MENU (SERVES 4-6)

- Steamed stuffed bitter melon with black bean sauce
- +
- Crispy Cantonese fish rolls
- +
- My mum's steamed chicken with Chinese sausage
- +
- Caramelised apples with sesame

chinese new year menu.

CRUNCH TIME
Crispy Cantonese
fish rolls

POT LUCK
Steamed chicken with
Chinese sausage

NEW YEAR NIBBLES
Steamed stuffed bitter melon
with black bean sauce



Crispy Cantonese
fish rolls, p66

**My mum's steamed chicken
with Chinese sausage**

SERVES 4-6 AS PART OF A SHARING MENU.
HANDS-ON TIME 10 MIN, STEAMING TIME
25 MIN, PLUS MARINATING

“Chicken, a symbol of fortune,
was at the centre of our Chinese
New Year dinner. My mum simply
steamed it with my favourite,
Chinese sausages.”

**MAKE
AHEAD** Marinate the chicken up to
1 day ahead, then keep
covered and chilled.

**KNOW-
HOW** Buy Chinese air-dried pork
sausage (often sold as lap
cheong or lachang) at waiyee
hong.com or Chinese supermarkets.
If you can't find it, omit it.

- 450g free-range skinless
boneless chicken thighs, cut into
bite-size pieces
- 1 tbsp light soy sauce
- 1½ tbsp shaoxing rice wine or
dry sherry
- 1 tsp sugar
- 1 tsp toasted sesame oil
- 2 tsp cornflour
- 4 Chinese pork sausages
(about 100g), cut into 1cm slices
– see Know-how
- Shredded spring onion to garnish
- Steamed rice and greens to serve

YOU'LL ALSO NEED...
• Steamer or large wok/pan with
a lid and a rack set inside; lipped
heatproof plate or bowl that will
sit inside the steamer

1 Stir together the chicken, soy, rice
wine, sugar, sesame oil, cornflour and
some black pepper in a bowl. Leave
to marinate at room temperature for
20 minutes (see Make Ahead).

2 Transfer to the plate/bowl and mix
with the sliced sausages.

3 Set up a steamer (or put a rack in
a large wok or deep pan) and add
5cm of water. Bring to the boil, lower
in the dish of chicken/sausages, turn
the heat to low, cover and steam for
25 minutes or until cooked through.
Serve garnished with shredded
spring onions, with steamed rice
and greens on the side.

PER SERVING (FOR 6) 203kcal,
11g fat (3.7g saturated), 19.8g protein,
5.9g carbs (2.2g sugars), 0.9g salt,
0.9g fibre →





SUSY ATKINS' WINE PICKS

Try a German riesling with the savoury dishes here, ideally an off-dry example. The whistle-clean apple tang and honeyed hint are perfect. Ken's apples with sesame need a properly sweet wine though, best of all a Loire Valley dessert chenin blanc.

Steamed stuffed bitter melon with black bean sauce

SERVES 4-6 AS PART OF A SHARING MENU.

HANDS-ON TIME 20 MIN, STEAMING

TIME 15-18 MIN

“My mother loved to make these at Chinese New Year because they represent the giving of gifts – a surprise treat wrapped up inside bitter melon. Bitter melon or cucumber lends itself well to stuffing, its tender, succulent flesh complemented by a savoury filling.”

MAKE
AHEAD

Make to the end of step 2, cool, then cover and chill for up to 6 hours.

KNOW-
HOW

Bitter melons have a tough cucumber-like texture with a strong, bitter flavour. They're available from Asian supermarkets and at thai-food-online.co.uk. If you can't find them use cucumber instead. Fermented black beans are salted

preserved black soybeans. Fermented black bean paste is available in the Cook's Ingredients range at Waitrose. If you can't find it, use the same amount of black bean sauce from a jar.

FOOD TEAM'S TIP Freeze leftover filling in an airtight container for up to 1 month. Defrost in the fridge overnight before using.

- 2 large bitter melons (350-450g; see Know-how, or use cucumber)

FOR THE FILLING

- 225g British free-range 10% fat minced pork
- 2 tsp finely chopped fresh ginger
- 2 tbsp finely chopped spring onions
- 2 tbsp shaoxing rice wine or dry sherry
- Pinch sugar
- 1 tbsp light soy sauce
- 1 tsp toasted sesame oil
- 1 medium free-range egg, lightly beaten
- 1 tsp cornflour, plus extra for dusting

FOR THE SAUCE

- 2 tbsp groundnut or vegetable oil
- 1 tbsp roughly chopped garlic
- 2 tbsp fermented black bean paste (see Know-how)
- 1 tbsp shaoxing rice wine or dry sherry
- 1 tbsp oyster sauce
- 200ml chicken stock
- 1 tsp cornflour mixed with 1 tsp cold water
- 2 tsp toasted sesame oil

YOU'LL ALSO NEED...

- Steamer or wok/deep pan with a lid and a rack set inside; lipped heatproof plate that will fit inside

1 For the filling, mix all the ingredients in a bowl. Cut the bitter melon (or cucumber) into 2.5cm rounds, discarding the ends. With a small sharp knife, remove and discard the core of pulp and seeds. **2** Lightly dust the insides of the slices with cornflour. Fill each with a generous spoonful of the filling, then arrange on a heatproof plate (one that will fit inside the steamer). See Make Ahead and tip.

3 Set up a steamer (or put a rack in a wok or deep pan) and half fill with water. Bring to the boil over a high heat, then carefully lower in the plate. Turn the heat to low, then cover tightly and steam gently for 15-18 minutes (you may have to do this in two batches).

4 Meanwhile to make the sauce, heat a wok or large frying pan over a high heat until very hot. Add the oil and, when slightly smoking, add the garlic and black bean paste, then stir-fry for 30 seconds. Add the remaining sauce ingredients, except the cornflour mixture and sesame oil. Simmer, then stir in the cornflour mixture until thickened. Bubble gently for 1 minute. Stir in the sesame oil, transfer the stuffed bitter melon to a serving plate, pour over the sauce and serve.

PER SERVING (FOR 6) 208kcal, 14.1g fat (3.2g saturated), 12.7g protein, 6.1g carbs (3g sugars), 1.1g salt, 1.7g fibre →

chinese new year menu.



SWEET AND STICKY
Caramelised apples
with sesame, p66

RECIPES KEN HOM
PHOTOGRAPHS DAVID CHARBIT
FOOD STYLING KATY MCCLELLAND
STYLING VICTORIA ELDRIDGE

新年快樂

Crispy Cantonese fish rolls

SERVES 4-6 AS PART OF A SHARING FEAST.
HANDS-ON TIME 40 MIN

“Fish symbolises prosperity. If there was a large crowd, a whole fish would be served but my mum, being economical, used a fish paste instead. Although not totally traditional, it did bring us prosperity!”

MAKE AHEAD Assemble the rolls and make the dip up to 4 hours ahead. Cover the rolls and chill until ready to finish the recipe.

KEN'S TIP Traditionally we wrap our fish rolls in caul fat (it's a membrane used to wrap pâtés and faggots). Here I used filo pastry instead, which works just as well and is easier to find.

FOOD TEAM'S TIP If your pan isn't big enough to fry 25cm rolls, halve the pastry and make 8 rolls.

FOR THE SALT AND PEPPER DIP

- 3 tbsp sea salt flakes
- 2 tbsp sichuan peppercorns

FOR THE FISH PASTE

- 450g sustainable skinless white fish fillets, such as cod or sea bass, cut into 2.5cm squares
- 1 medium free-range egg white
- 2 tbsp shaoxing rice wine or dry sherry
- 3 tbsp chopped spring onions
- 2 tsp cornflour
- 2 tsp toasted sesame oil
- 5cm piece fresh ginger
- 4 sheets filo pastry, about 30cm x 46cm (see Ken's tip)
- Cornflour for dusting
- Vegetable oil for frying
- 1 lemon, cut into wedges

YOU'LL ALSO NEED...

- Large, deep wok or pan; food processor or blender; digital probe thermometer; baking tray lined with kitchen paper

1 To make the salt and pepper dip, heat a wok or large frying pan until hot, then add the salt and sichuan

peppercorns. Stir-fry for 1 minute, remove and set aside to cool, then roughly grind with a pestle and mortar for 1 minute and set aside. You won't need it all, but it lasts for weeks and goes with many things. 2 For the fish paste, mix the fish, egg white, rice wine, spring onions, cornflour and sesame oil in a food processor with a little salt and pepper. Coarsely grate the ginger, then squeeze the juice into the food processor and whizz to a smooth paste. (Use the pulse button or the paste will turn out rubbery.)

3 Spread out the pieces of filo on a worktop, then divide the fish paste evenly among them in a sausage-like roll, about 25cm long (see Food Team's tip). Roll up the filo, tucking in the ends as you roll. Repeat until the filo has been used up. Dust with cornflour and shake off any excess (see Make Ahead).

4 Set the wok or pan over a high heat. When hot, pour in the oil and heat to 180°C on a digital probe thermometer (a cube of bread should turn golden in about 30 seconds). Gently lower in 2 of the fish rolls and cook until golden brown and crisp (about 5 minutes). Carefully remove with a slotted spoon and put on the prepared tray. Fry the remaining rolls. Serve with lemon wedges and the salt and pepper dip.

PER SERVING (FOR 6) 215kcal, 9.5g fat (0.8g saturated), 15.8g protein, 15.3g carbs (0.8g sugars), 0.8g salt, 0.1g fibre

Caramelised apples with sesame

SERVES 4-6 AS PART OF A SHARING FEAST.
HANDS-ON TIME 45 MIN

“Every year, we finished our Chinese New Year dinner with apples. The word for apple in Chinese is ‘ping’; a homonym of ping is peace – and we all need that in the New Year.”

MAKE AHEAD The apples are wonderful hot or at room temperature. Keep at room temperature for up to 2 hours before serving.



The batter is very thick and sticky. It will loosen a little after resting and the juice from the apples is released.

- 300ml groundnut oil
- 2-3 large firm apples, peeled, cored and cut into wedges

FOR THE BATTER

- 40g plain flour
- 2 tbsp cornflour
- 1 medium free-range egg, lightly beaten

FOR THE CARAMEL COATING

- 200g caster sugar
- 2 tbsp groundnut oil
- 1 tbsp black sesame seeds
- 2 tsp white sesame seeds

YOU'LL ALSO NEED...

- 2 large deep woks or pans; digital probe thermometer; baking tray lined with kitchen paper

1 Mix the batter ingredients in a medium bowl until just combined. Set aside for 30 minutes (see tip). 2 In one of the woks or pans, heat the oil to about 170°C on a digital probe thermometer (a cube of bread should turn golden in about 40 seconds). Drop the apple wedges into the batter and turn to coat. Using a slotted spoon, lift out a few pieces of apple at a time and let any excess batter drop off. Lower into the hot oil and fry for about 2 minutes until golden. Transfer to the prepared tray using a slotted spoon. Keep warm.

3 Fill a bowl with iced water. For the caramel coating, heat the sugar and 2 tablespoons oil in the other wok or pan until the sugar begins to caramelise and turn lightly golden (take care it doesn't burn). Add the sesame seeds and, once the caramel turns light brown, stir in the apple to coat. Remove with a slotted spoon to the bowl of iced water to harden. Transfer to a platter to serve (see Make Ahead).

PER SERVING (FOR 6) 368kcal, 14.9g fat (2.1g saturated), 3.5g protein, 53.9g carbs (44.4g sugars), 0.1g salt, 1.9g fibre



LISTEN TO KEN HOM

talk about life, the importance of family and his love of noodles on the delicious. podcast.