

Oriental Stir-Fried Beef and Bitter Melon

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This traditional Asian dish combines unexpected ingredients -such as bitter melon and fermented black beans - with savory stir fried beef. The fusion of inspired flavors makes this dish a one-of-a-kind treat for a Western palate, and is a unique and memorable meal. Pair with white rice and sake for a wonderful experience!

Ingredients:

1 tablespoon of fermented black beans
1 lb of bitter melon
½ lb of lean beef
2 teaspoons cornstarch.
2 teaspoons soy sauce
¼ teaspoon salt
Pinch of sugar
2 tablespoons water
1 tablespoon cornstarch
1 clove garlic, minced
1 ½ tablespoon cooking oil
¼ teaspoon salt
1 ½ tablespoon of cooking oil
½ cup of chicken stock

Directions:

1. Soak the fermented black beans.
2. Slice the bitter melon in half lengthwise. Scoop out the seeds; then cut into quarter-inch slices. Parboil 2 to 3 minutes.
3. Thinly slice the beef against the grain. Combine the 2 teaspoons of cornstarch, soy sauce, salt and sugar. Add to beef and toss to coat.
4. Blend the water and the 1 tablespoon of cornstarch to a paste. Drain the soaked black beans. Mince the garlic and mash with the beans.
5. Heat 1 ½ tablespoons of cooking oil. Add the remaining salt, then beef. Stir-fry for 2 minutes or until the beef loses its redness. Remove from pan.
6. Heat remaining 1 ½ tablespoons of cooking oil. Add the black bean mixture and stir-fry a few times. Add the bitter melon and stir-fry for about 1 minute to heat and coat with oil.
7. Stir in the stock and heat quickly. Cook, covered, for 2 minutes, over medium heat.
8. Return beef and stir-fry gently to reheat and blend flavors. Stir in the cornstarch paste to thicken.

Serve immediately.

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