

Spicy Sesame Noodles With Chicken and Peanuts

By Ali Slagle

YIELD 4 servings

TIME 30 minutes

In this quick and spicy weeknight noodle dish, sizzling hot oil is poured over red-pepper flakes, orange peel, crunchy peanuts, soy sauce and sesame oil. While you brown the ground chicken, the mixture sits, and the flavors become more pronounced and fiery. Tossed with soft noodles and browned chicken, the bright chile-peanut oil shines. If you crave something green, throw in a quick-cooking green vegetable when you break up the chicken in Step 3. You can also swap the chicken with ground pork or beef, or crumbled tofu.

INGREDIENTS

1 ½ tablespoons red-pepper flakes
1 ½ tablespoons low-sodium soy sauce
1 ½ teaspoons toasted sesame oil, plus more as needed
Kosher salt and black pepper
½ cup plus 1 tablespoon neutral oil, like grapeseed or vegetable
6 tablespoons roasted, salted peanuts, coarsely chopped
Rind of 1/2 orange, peeled into 2- to 3-inch strips
1 pound ground chicken
10 to 12 ounces ramen or udon noodles, preferably fresh
3 tablespoons finely chopped chives

PREPARATION

Step 1

In a medium heatproof bowl, stir together the red-pepper flakes, soy sauce and sesame oil. Set next to the stovetop.

Step 2

Bring a large pot of salted water to boil. Meanwhile, in a large (12-inch) skillet over medium heat, cook the 1/2 cup oil, peanuts and orange rind, shaking the pan occasionally, until the peanuts are golden and bubbling, 3 to 5 minutes. Immediately pour the contents of the skillet over the red-pepper mixture (be careful of splattering!) and set aside. (Once cool, the chile oil will keep in the refrigerator for 2 weeks in an airtight container.)

Step 3

Meanwhile, in the same skillet, heat the remaining tablespoon oil over medium-high. Add the chicken and press it down with a wooden spoon into a thin layer. Season with salt and a generous amount of black pepper and cook, without stirring, occasionally pressing the layer of chicken down, until the bottom is browned, 5 to 7 minutes. Break the chicken up into small pieces and cook, stirring occasionally, until cooked through, 1 to 2 minutes more.

Step 4

While the chicken cooks, cook the noodles according to package directions, until chewy but not soft. Drain and toss with a bit of sesame oil.

Step 5

Remove and discard the orange rind from the chile oil. Off the heat, add the chile oil to the chicken and stir to coat, scraping up any browned bits from the pan. Add the noodles and toss to coat. Top with chives and serve at once.

PRIVATE NOTES

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