Mushroom and Peanut Rice Noodles

2 light noodle bowls, each with half the noodles, mushrooms, full measured sauce and herbs | Active 15 min | Cook 14 min | Total 40 min

Ingredients

• 180 g (6.3 oz) cultivated white button or cremini mushrooms (Agaricus bisporus), cut into 3 mm (1/8 in) slices; no wild or specialty substitutes for this timed method
• 20 ml (1 US tbsp plus 1 US tsp) water for the mushrooms
• 5 ml (1 US tsp) toasted sesame oil
• 4 g garlic, about 1 medium clove, finely chopped
• 80 g (2.8 oz) thin dry rice noodles with a 3-5 minute off-heat hot-water-soak packet method
• 800 ml (about 3 1/3 US cups) water for soaking noodles; 45 ml (3 US tbsp) of this is reserved for sauce and the remainder is drained
• 35 g (1.2 oz) smooth peanut butter
• 15 ml (1 US tbsp) reduced-salt soy sauce
• 15 ml (1 US tbsp) lime juice
• 5 g (0.18 oz) brown sugar
• 20 g (0.71 oz) spring onion, thinly sliced
• 5 g fresh coriander leaves, about 1/4 US cup loosely packed before chopping, chopped

Set out

1000 W microwave with turntable, Microwave-safe bowl, 1.5 L (about 1.6 US qt) capacity, with vented cover, Wide deep microwave-safe bowl, 2 L (about 2.1 US qt) capacity, for water and noodles, Microwave-safe vented cover for noodle bowl, Colander, Knife and board, Tongs or two forks, Spoon and small sauce bowl, Kitchen scale and measuring jug, Oven mitts, Food thermometer for reheating leftovers, Two serving bowls

Allergens

Peanuts, Soy, Wheat, Sesame. Check labels and substitutions.

Make it

1. Combine mushrooms, the separate 20 ml water, sesame oil and garlic in the 1.5 L bowl. Cover with the vented cover. Microwave at 1000 W full power for 3 minutes, stir, then cook 1-2 minutes more until the slices are fully soft. Leave covered outside the microwave, keeping every spoonful of juice.

2. Put the 800 ml soaking water into the wide 2 L bowl and cover loosely with its vented cover. Stir the water before heating. Microwave at full power in 3-minute stages, carefully stirring between stages, for about 6-9 minutes in total until visibly boiling. Use shorter bursts near the end instead of heating past a boil, then remove with mitts; the water and steam are very hot. Carefully measure 45 ml of the boiling water into the small sauce bowl, using a heat-safe measuring spoon.

3. Submerge all the dry noodles in the remaining hot water, separating strands gently with tongs. Cover with the vented cover and leave outside the oven for the packet's full 3-5 minute soak, stirring once, until tender but not mushy. Give a longer stated packet soak in full if required. Drain in the colander; do not leave the drained noodles waiting.

4. During that soak, stir the peanut butter, soy sauce, lime juice and sugar into the reserved 45 ml hot water until smooth. Toss all this sauce with the drained noodles, mushrooms and all their juices. Fold in spring

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onion and coriander, divide the entire mixture between two bowls and eat promptly.

The sauce water comes from the same measure

Reserve 45 ml from the 800 ml hot noodle water before adding the noodles. This is not 45 ml extra water and does not depend on an unmeasured mug of pasta water.

A soft mushroom finish

The method makes tender mushrooms with their juices. It does not reproduce a seared skillet surface, so the illustration should show moist slices rather than char marks.

Ingredient labels

Most ordinary soy sauce contains wheat. A certified gluten-free tamari may replace it in the same 15 ml amount if appropriate, but check every label rather than assuming the whole meal is gluten-free.

A useful detail

The 40-minute estimate allows chopping and measuring, up to 5 minutes mushroom heating, up to 9 minutes water heating, the full noodle soak and tossing. One oven heats those bowls sequentially. Noodle thickness and the manufacturer's process determine the soak; the stated route is for thin soak-type rice noodles, not a universal pasta cook. Water already warm will boil sooner, so use the visible boiling endpoint rather than heating blindly.

Another way

Replace peanut butter with 35 g (1.2 oz) smooth sunflower-seed butter. Check its label for nut cross-contact; soy sauce and sesame oil remain in the base.

Replace coriander with 5 g finely chopped flat-leaf parsley. Keep the measured spring onion rather than adding an extra herb garnish.

Keep it well

Refrigerate shallow portions within 2 hours, or 1 hour above 90°F/32°C, at 40°F/4°C or below and use within 2 days. The noodles soften during storage. Eat cold, or reheat once with 15 ml (1 US tbsp) water per portion, covered and stirred, until 165°F/74°C throughout; stand covered for 2 minutes.