BORDERLESS KITCHEN

Seoul Meets Mexico City

Korean Fire. Mexican Soul.

Three-recipe sampler

Sebastian Dri

Welcome

Three complete recipes from Seoul Meets Mexico City.

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Kimchi Elote Bites

Heat Level: NOTICEABLE

Ingredients

For the Elote Base

3 cups corn kernels (fresh or frozen, thawed)

2 tbsp mayonnaise

2 tbsp crema or sour cream

1/3 cup crumbled queso fresco

1 tbsp lime juice

1/2 tsp smoked paprika

Salt, to taste

For the Kimchi Finish

1/2 cup finely chopped kimchi (well-drained)

1 tsp gochujang

1 tsp honey

1 tsp sesame oil

For Garnish

1 tbsp chopped cilantro

1 tsp toasted sesame seeds

Lime wedges

Instructions

Heat a large skillet over medium-high heat. Add the corn and cook dry (no oil) for 5-7 minutes, stirring occasionally, until lightly charred in spots. Remove from heat and let cool slightly. In a mixing bowl, combine the charred corn, mayonnaise, crema, queso fresco, lime juice, smoked paprika, and a pinch of salt. Mix until creamy and well coated. In a separate small bowl, combine the chopped kimchi, gochujang, honey, and sesame oil. Stir until evenly dressed and glossy. To assemble, spoon the elote mixture into small serving cups or onto tostada chips for bite-sized portions. Top each with a spoonful of the kimchi mixture. Finish with cilantro, sesame seeds, and a light squeeze of lime. Serve immediately while the corn is still slightly - WARM.

Why This Works

Elote is already a balance of sweet corn, creamy richness, and bright acidity. Kimchi brings an entirely new dimension - fermentation, heat, and umami - that mirrors and amplifies those same elements. The natural sweetness of corn softens kimchi’s sharpness, while the creamy base carries both flavors seamlessly. Gochujang deepens the heat with a subtle sweetness that ties into the honey and corn, creating a layered spice profile rather than a sharp burn. Sesame oil adds a nutty backbone that bridges Korean flavors into the dairy-rich Mexican base, making the fusion feel intentional rather than forced.

Chef’s Note

Drain your kimchi well before mixing - too much liquid will thin the elote and dull the charred corn flavor.

Kimchi Fried Rice with Chorizo

Heat Level: NOTICEABLE

Ingredients

For the Fried Rice

3 cups cooked white rice (preferably day- old)

8 oz Mexican chorizo (casings removed)

1 cup kimchi, chopped (with a bit of juice)

2 cloves garlic, minced

1/2 small onion, diced

1 tbsp gochujang

1 tbsp soy sauce

1 tsp sesame oil

1/2 tsp black pepper

For the Eggs (Optional)

4 eggs

For Garnish

2 green onions, sliced

1 tbsp chopped cilantro

1 tsp toasted sesame seeds

Lime wedges

Instructions

Heat a large skillet or wok over medium-high heat. Add the chorizo and cook for 4-5 minutes, breaking it apart, until browned and slightly crispy. Remove excess grease if needed, leaving a bit for flavor. Add the onion and garlic and sauté for 2-3 minutes until softened. Add the chopped kimchi and cook for 3-4 minutes until lightly caramelized. Add the cold rice, breaking up any clumps. Stir-fry over high heat for 3-4 minutes, pressing the rice flat between stirs to develop crispy bits on the bottom. Add gochujang, soy sauce, and sesame oil. Toss everything together until evenly coated and fragrant. If using eggs, push the rice to the sides and fry eggs in the center of the pan, then fold them in or serve on top. Serve the fried rice hot, topped with a fried egg if using, and finish with green onions, cilantro, sesame seeds, and a squeeze of lime.

Why This Works

Kimchi fried rice already delivers BOLD, fermented flavor with a balance of spice and acidity. Chorizo brings a smoky, spiced richness that naturally complements those elements, adding depth and a slightly crisp texture that contrasts with the soft rice. The fat from the chorizo coats the grains, amplifying flavor in every bite. Gochujang enhances the heat and umami, tying the dish together into a cohesive, layered flavor profile. The combination mirrors the shared love of fermented, spiced, and charred elements across two strong culinary traditions that meet seamlessly in the pan.

Chef’s Note

Use cold, day-old rice for the best texture - it fries better and won’t turn mushy.

Sweet Rice Horchata Pudding (Vegetarian)

Ingredients

For the Pudding

1/2 cup short-grain white rice

2 cups milk (or plant- based milk)

1 cup water

1/2 cup sweetened condensed milk

1/4 cup sugar

1 cinnamon stick

1 tsp vanilla extract

Pinch of salt

For the Flavor Finish

1 tbsp ground toasted sesame seeds (or sesame powder)

1/2 tsp cinnamon

For Garnish

Ground cinnamon

Toasted sesame seeds

Optional: chopped nuts

Instructions

In a medium saucepan, combine rice, water, milk, cinnamon stick, and a pinch of salt. Bring to a gentle boil over medium heat. Reduce heat to low and simmer, stirring occasionally, for 15-20 minutes until the rice is tender and the mixture begins to thicken. Stir in the sweetened condensed milk and sugar, continuing to cook for another 5-10 minutes until creamy and thickened to your desired consistency. Remove the cinnamon stick and stir in vanilla extract and ground sesame seeds. Mix until fully incorporated. Remove from heat and let cool slightly - it will continue to thicken as it sits. Serve - WARM or chilled, topped with a sprinkle of cinnamon, sesame seeds, and optional nuts.

Why This Works

Horchata is known for its comforting blend of rice, cinnamon, and sweetness, while Korean-style rice desserts often incorporate nutty, roasted flavors like sesame. Combining these elements creates a pudding that is both familiar and layered, with creamy richness balanced by - WARM spice. The sesame adds a subtle depth that enhances the rice without overpowering it, while the condensed milk brings a smooth, indulgent texture. The result is a dessert that feels nostalgic yet elevated, with a gentle complexity that unfolds in every bite.

Chef’s Note

Stir frequently toward the end of cooking to prevent sticking and achieve a smooth, creamy texture.

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