



Black Bean & Chilli Prawns on Crisp Noodles

In Chinese cooking, black bean and chilli is a classic combination, often served with clams, especially pipis. It's a very versatile seasoning and great with any seafood, including prawns or even a simple piece of pan-fried fish. Sichuan chilli sauce is made from ground dried chilli, sesame seeds and oil and separates into layers of sediment and oil; unless a recipe calls for just chilli oil, stir before using so that you get a mixture of both. Serve a little extra chilli sauce on the side if you like. Look for dongguan rice vermicelli noodles in your Asian grocer, I use Golden Swallow brand.

Serves 2



INGREDIENTS

- 6 medium-sized green prawns
- 2 x 70g blocks rice vermicelli noodles
- Vegetable oil, for pan-frying
- 2 teaspoons salted black beans
- 2 teaspoons Sichuan chilli sauce, plus extra for serving
- 2 cloves garlic, crushed
- 1 teaspoon finely grated ginger
- ½ green onion, finely sliced on the diagonal
- Coriander leaves, for garnishing

Sauce Ingredients

- 1½ teaspoons cornflour
- ½ cup water
- 2 teaspoons oyster sauce
- 1 teaspoon castor sugar
- 1 teaspoon sweet dark soy sauce
- Freshly ground white pepper, to taste

METHOD

1. Remove prawns from the fridge 30–60 minutes before cooking, peel, devein, halve lengthways, cover and set aside to come to room temperature.
2. Meanwhile, add noodles to a large saucepan of boiling water and cook for about 4 minutes, without stirring, until just tender, then tip into a colander to drain well.
3. Prepare Sauce Ingredients: combine cornflour and water and stir to dissolve, stir in remaining ingredients and set aside.
4. Combine black beans, chilli sauce, garlic and ginger. Set aside.
5. Cover the base of a frying pan (or wok) generously with oil and heat over medium–high heat.
6. Add noodles and fry for 4–5 minutes on one side, until well coloured and crisp.
7. Drain on a paper towel-lined rack then place in a shallow serving bowl, crisp side down.
8. Add 2 teaspoons of oil to a wok and place over medium-high heat.
9. Add black bean mixture and stir-fry for 30 seconds or so until aromatic.
10. Add prawns, increase heat to high and stir-fry for 30 seconds or so, until they change colour.
11. Add Sauce Ingredients, bring to the boil and continue stirring for a further minute or so until it thickens and everything is well coated.
12. Pour prawn mixture over the noodles.
13. Garnish with green onion and coriander and serve.