

Chinese Steamed Fish with Ginger and Shallots

Chinese Steamed Fish with Ginger and Shallots! This is one of the simplest and most delicious ways of preparing fish. A whole fish is steamed to the point where the flesh is just tender. Enjoy the sizzling theatrics as the fish is doused with hot oil to release all the beautiful flavours from the aromatics.



Chinese Steamed Fish with Ginger and Shallots is one of the many Asian recipes taught to me by my husband. It is also one of the easiest! At home, we keep it very simple: soy sauce, ginger, shallots and some coriander (cilantro) scattered on

top.

Do I need special equipment?

Absolutely not! We don't have a steaming oven or even bamboo steaming baskets, and for a long time we didn't even have a wok. I know that's almost blasphemous for a part Chinese family not to own a wok. You can blame my husband for that.

As not everyone has the right sort of equipment for steaming, I have included instructions that should cover all bases.

In the past, we used a large pot to steam our fish. It worked perfectly well. Somewhere along the line, we ended up with a wok, which is what we now use (we still don't own any steaming baskets though).



Whether I use a wok or pot, I always place a trivet (metal tripod in photo) on the base.

The trivet is what the plate with the fish sits on. I do so because I don't have bamboo steaming baskets, but I have given instructions for steaming with baskets below.



Don't have a trivet? Turn a small heat proof bowl upside down in your wok/pot and place the plate with the fish on top. I learnt this tip from a friend.

If you use a bamboo steaming basket you won't need a trivet.



There's a number of different types of fish that steam beautifully. Barrumundi, Sea Bream, Sea Bass or Red Snapper are ideal.

Our family favourite is Jade Perch. It's a little more on the oily side. Think on what you'll save on fish oil capsules.

Here's your chance to steam fish like the restaurants do, and it won't cost you as much!

Danielle

Preparation Time: 5 mins

Cooking Time: 15 mins

Servings: 2

Ingredients

- 1 x 600 g / 1.3 lb whole white fish, cleaned and gutted (note 1)
 - 3 stems of shallots (scallions), cut into 5 cm / 2" lengths
 - 4 cm / 1.5 " piece of ginger, sliced thinly then cut into strips (julienned)
 - handful of coriander (cilantro)
 - 1 tbsp soy sauce (regular or light)
 - 2 tbsp oil (vegetable or canola)
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Instructions

1. Cut 2 slashes on each side of the fish, approximately 1 cm / 1/2 " deep (note 2).
2. Place the fish on a plate. Place 1/3 of the shallots and ginger strips inside the fish cavity. Scatter a few strips of ginger on top.
3. Cook the fish according to what equipment you have. **Go to Point 9 or Point 10.**
4. When the fish is almost ready, heat oil over medium high heat until **hot**.
5. Transfer fish to serving plate. Scatter with coriander and remaining ginger and shallots.
6. Pour soy sauce over the top.
7. Drizzle the hot oil over the fish and listen to it sizzle.
8. Serve with steamed rice and Asian greens (note 3).
9. **Steaming in a wok with bamboo steaming baskets:** Place the fish inside the steaming basket. **Cover with lid.** Place the basket inside the wok. Fill the wok with water (make sure water doesn't touch the basket). Bring the water to the boil over high heat. Steam for 15 minutes

(note 4).

10. Steaming in large pot (no bamboo steaming baskets):

Place a trivet on the base of pot (if you don't have a trivet use a heat proof bowl). Place the fish on the trivet. Fill pot with water. Make sure water doesn't touch the plate. Bring to the boil over high heat. **Place the lid on the pot.** Steam for 15 minutes (note 4).

Notes

1. Barrumundi, Sea Bream, Sea Bass or Red Snapper are ideal for steaming. I use Jade Perch because it's our family favourite. The size of the fish will be determined by the size of your wok/pot.
2. I don't cut all the way through as it's easier to separate the flesh from the bones in one long piece.
3. A 600 g / 1.3 lb fish is plenty for 2 with some steamed rice and Asian greens on the side. Generally speaking, in Chinese families, this dish is eaten as part of a large shared meal.
4. To check if the fish is ready, pierce the skin with a fork all the way to the bone. If it separates from the bone easily, it's ready.