



Baeksuk

Hot broth, tender chicken meat, and nutritious porridge combined into a single dish

If you're looking to regain your strength this summer, there is no better dish than baeksuk. Made from a whole chicken, baeksuk is a Korean dish known to help restore your energy. The tender meat and the porridge cooked in delicious chicken broth will make a hearty, healthy meal.

Baeksuk, Easy yet Tasty Meal

Baeksuk is a dish made by boiling meat or fish without any seasoning. Any kind of meat is suitable for baeksuk, but the most popular is chicken. The taste of baeksuk is similar to another traditional food, samgyetang ginseng chicken soup, but it's more affordable and easier to make. When you make baeksuk, you first cook the meat in the broth. After the meat is well cooked and removed, glutinous rice and garlic are added to the remaining broth to make a porridge. The broth, obtained by simmering the chicken over heat for a long time, is packed with nutrition.

Cooking Baeksuk with Mongolian Students

We met Tuul and Saruul from Ulaanbaatar. They got to know each other while studying at International Cooperation and Education Center at Yong In University. Although it has only been slightly over a year since they came to Korea, we were amazed by their fluent Korean.

The two friends live in the same dormitory and enjoy sharing food with each other, taking turns to cook Mongolian and Korean food. Perhaps because lamb and beef are common ingredients in their home country, their favorite Korean dishes are dakbokkeumtang braised spicy chicken and



jeyukbokkeum stir-fried pork. They were extremely pleased at the opportunity to learn a Korean recipe with a friend, and looked forward to whipping up a dish that was different from what they used to make.

Tasting the Deep Flavors of Korea

The first step to cooking baeksuk is to prepare the raw chicken. The remaining feathers are plucked, and the fat near the bottom is removed. Both Tuul and Saruul are fascinated by the various medicinal herbs that go into the dish. The ingredients, many of which they are seeing for the first time, include glutinous rice, mung beans, milk vetch roots, chestnuts and ginkgo nuts. Saruul grabs a handful of ginkgo nuts and asks, “Is this good for your health?” The two, who are majoring in the cosmetics business, answer their own question, saying, “These herbs are surely good for your skin.” The cooking instructor informs them that the herbs help to get rid of the smell of the chicken and also act as an energy booster. The students are delighted to be learning such a “wonderful recipe.”

The chicken and various ingredients are boiled in a pot for about 50 minutes, and the irresistible smell of baeksuk soon fills the air. After taking a whiff, Tuul and Saruul exclaim, “It smells so good!” The meat is taken out of the pot and is ready to eat with salt and pepper. The two friends say that the dish

brings out the deep flavors of Korean cuisine. Now, it’s time to cook some delicious porridge in the chicken broth.

Baeksuk, a Bowl of Love from Korea

Glutinous rice porridge can be made simply by adding glutinous rice to the broth, but today we take a different approach. Glutinous rice and mung beans are placed in a deep pot and stir-fried in sesame oil. The broth is poured in, along with a handful of chopped green onions that adds different colors to the food. It already looks and smells good enough to be served. Tuul and Saruul continue stirring to prevent the porridge from sticking to the bottom. They add more broth to get the right thickness. A pinch of salt is added as seasoning.

Saruul says, “This dish is truly cooked from the heart. It’s bound to be delicious.” He believes that devotion is the key ingredient to good cooking. The two friends are very pleased to have learned the recipe from a professional chef, and are excited to cook baeksuk for their parents when they return to Mongolia. They empty their bowls to the last drop and seem ready to beat the summer heat.

“Baeksuk has a warmth and tenderness similar to people’s jeong, or affection.” Baeksuk is the ultimate comfort food, and not only for people who live in Korea. Based on Tuul and Charol’s experience, it may soon become a therapeutic dish for people from all around the world. For the two friends, the cooking session will be an unforgettable memory of their time in Korea.



Baeksuk Ingredients:

1 whole chicken, 1.5 cups glutinous rice, 1.5 cups mung beans, 5 jujubes, 10 whole garlic cloves, 8 ginkgo nuts, 3 chestnuts, 1 stalk of green onion, 1 pouch of medicinal herbs (milk vetch root, stalkless-flower eleuthero stem, prickly castor oil tree stem, kudzu root, oriental raisin tree stem, angelica root), water, a pinch of salt