

## **Meditation Master JinBodhi Gourmet Series:**

### **Himalayan Cold Noodles**

Hello, everyone, I am here in Malaysia. Today, I am introducing my childhood favorite food: cold noodles. Since this dish is my special style, I have named it "Himalayan cold noodles." Do you know how to pronounce this? (Master, what are cold noodles?) Of course the noodles are cold. (Is there ice in it?) No. There is no ice in it. It is just cool noodles, not warm at all. (Master, what do you call this dish?) Himalayan cold noodles. (Hi-ma-lay-an cold noodles?) It is a bit difficult for you to pronounce. Maybe you know better in English. (Hi-ma-lay-an cold noodles.) Himalayan cold noodles.

This is a very special noodle dish. Chinese Northerners know this dish. It is eaten cold, not hot, maybe at room temperature and without soup, just the noodles. It is a bit complicated to make, but it is delicious and nutritious. So, I am going to introduce this recipe to my friends. You can try making it when you have time. It is especially good for sharing with friends. They will be very impressed. I am going to use a lot of seasonings. As you can see, I have many in front of me. However, the amount to use is entirely up to you. You can use just the chili oil and soy sauce. You can use more seasonings to make it more nutritious and tasty.

Let me go through them with you. This is spring onion, as you know. It enhances the flavor of the dish. Here are the cumin seeds. Have you seen cumin before, young man? (No. What are these?) What are these? It's an herbal spice. They are seeds of an herb. (Is it edible?) Of course it is. Seasonings are all edible. Here, have some. It is very fragrant. You can find them in Xinjiang or Gansu, China. It has a unique fragrance and lots of health benefits. It regulates the circulation in our stomach and spleen which keeps our stomach healthy. It eradicates internal dampness, coldness and pain. Those with weak and cold stomach and spleen tend to have stomach irritation or diarrhea, or have a greenish hue on their nose, and often lose their appetite. It is hard to cure this problem. Cumin could help a little. It helps to eliminate stomach coldness.

Here, have more, you seem to like it. Come on, have some more. (Thank you, Master!) Try it, cumin seeds taste good. You can't find them in Malaysia. They are special, right? (Yes, it is.) Its flavor is so unique; you can't find it in other spices. First, let's toast these seeds using medium heat as we don't want them to be burnt. No oil is needed, just stir them frequently to avoid burning. When you see them turning golden brown and see smoke rising, take them out and grind them with a rolling pin. It is one of the seasonings for this dish.

Next, these are *cao-guo* (black cardamoms), a spice used in Northwestern China. They are the seeds of a plant that looks like olives. Don't eat them plain as they don't taste good. It deals with stomach coldness and improves digestion. If we have eaten foods that are hard to digest, use this as seasoning or to make tea to drink. This helps with digestion, nausea, diarrhea and malaria. It also contains anti-inflammatory properties and can stop bleeding. It is antiseptic, too. So, black cardamom is very useful. (Can I wash my hands with them?) Of course. If your hands are dirty, wash them with cardamom water. It's an antibacterial agent, but that's a bit costly. We can buy them from a spice store or Chinese herb shop. Then soak them in warm water for about 15 to 20 minutes. Next, I mix them in soy sauce, vinegar and chili oil.

These are Szechuan peppercorns. Have you heard about them? (Are they flower seeds?) Oh, no. These are called *hua-jiao* (Szechuan peppercorns). Can you guess if they are grown on a plant or tree? (Flowers...I think they grow on flowers.) On flowers? I don't know either. My mom said that they grew under the ground. (Under the ground?) Yes, like potatoes. They can rid internal dampness and coldness, and regulate circulation, and are effective at eliminating cold and pain. It can have an anesthetic effect if you eat too much. That reminds me of an old man who had a severe toothache. His wife gave him some peppercorns to chew with his painful tooth. After a while, the pain was relieved.

Raw Szechuan peppercorns are tingling and numbing in the mouth. Just chew 5 peppercorns for 2 minutes, your mouth will go numb. They carry

tingling and numbing properties. (Is it edible?) Yes, it is, but it is spicy. (Can I use it as anesthetic?) It is not that strong. Just try a small one. They are also good for the blood vessels and blood pressure. Chilis and Szechuan peppercorns are a must in Szechuan cuisine. If a dish makes your mouth tingle, it is the Szechuan peppercorns. Do you feel the numbness? (No.) Here, have 2 more peppercorns. In a while he will feel numb and fall as if drunk. Add this to your food to enhance the taste.

These are dried red chilies. Firstly, they will promote your appetite. You will eat more if a dish is hot and spicy. They also deal with arthritis, promote fat burning and blood circulation. The effect is very positive. Here you are. But it could be too spicy for you to eat. (Is it really spicy?) It is absolutely spicy. Last time, I gave it to a young man, it was so spicy that he fainted. There are super-hot chilies and peppers in the world, but not these. If I hold the world's hottest chili in my hand, the spiciness could make me faint. The spiciness is more powerful than strong poison. These red chilies are relatively mild among chili species. They are good for seasoning. And I remember...

Is it too hot for you? I remember, in Tibet, the old people who worked in the snow, after some time, their limbs, nose and ears would get frostbitten. They would boil these dried chilies in water for 15 minutes. Then they used the chili water to wash the frostbite for faster recovery. Chilies improve blood circulation and have good antibacterial effect. They can also help to prevent you from catching cold. (They are really hot.) They are? I don't think so, as you are still talking. The really hot ones will make you jump around. Ah, this one... (I feel the numbness now.) You will taste the sourness later. It is like the 5-flavor magnolia berries.

Now, let's prepare these mild dried red chilies. Usually, I would pan-fry or deep-fry them with cooking oil. Then, we only need the chili oil. It carries the spiciness and nutrients of chilies. We use it as a seasoning for our cold noodles. Thus, though the noodles are cold, they won't cause stomach upset. All because of the red chilies and Szechuan peppercorns. Here is a small bowl of the deep-fried chilies. I chopped them into small pieces and put them back into the chili oil. Would you like to try? (No.) Forget it. I don't want you to get into trouble.

Here, I have some white sesame seeds. There are 2 kinds of sesame seeds: black and white. I am using white sesames here. They are full of micro-elements, vitamins, and minerals such as iron, magnesium, zinc, calcium, etc. They have an abundance of nutrients that help to nourish the skin and blood. They make you look beautiful. You have good skin. You eat these a lot? (I eat black sesames.) Black sesames. No wonder your eyebrows are so black. Anyway, they are good for our health and skin. For young people and those who want to look good, add black or white sesame seeds to your diet as needed.

I have prepared lots of ingredients here such as cucumbers, eggplants, tomatoes, and red onions which are sweet and tasty. Here are the green chilies, and many more ingredients such as dried tofu, cilantro and green onions. Green onion replenishes and smooths our energy. Cilantro reduces inflammation and heat, and promotes urination. It is especially good for relieving fatigue. So, cilantro is a good ingredient for cooking and seasoning.

Side-dish ingredients: Cucumber, tomato, shallot, potato, cilantro, dried tofu, eggplant, green onion, green chili, cumin, cardamom, white sesame, dried chilies and Szechuan peppercorns.

Smack the cucumber then dice it up. (Master, how many do we need? How many cucumbers do we need?) As you wish. It depends on how much you can eat and how many friends you are serving. One cucumber is enough for 4 people. (One cucumber for 4 people...) Yes. Because we have other veggies, not just cucumbers. Northern Chinese call potatoes the "earth beans."

Dice the potatoes. Slice and dice the eggplants.

Haven't been cooking for years, I am much slower now.

Dice the dried tofu.

I have to cook more in the kitchen later.

Chop the red onions.

Cut out the cilantro's roots. We can boil the roots in water to make cilantro root tea. It opens up our meridian channels and relieves rheumatism.

Smack the green chilies and dice them.

Advance preparations: Toast and grind cumin seeds. Soak cardamoms in warm water then mix them with soy sauce, vinegar and chili oil. Cut and fry the dried chilies to make chili oil. Chop and fry the green onions to make green onion oil. Stir-fry the Szechuan peppercorns and white sesames. Chop up the cilantro, green onions and green chilies. Dice the cucumbers, potatoes, eggplants, tomatoes and dried tofu.

As we have lots of veggies, we use a bit more oil. Add in the onions and green chilies. Stir-fry them and then add in some salt for seasoning. Then, add in the dried tofu. Now, add in just a few Szechuan peppercorns. Eggplants need more time to cook, so should be added in earlier. You need to add more oil because the eggplants are oil-absorbing. This way will make them very delicious. Now, add in the potatoes. (Add the potatoes.) Though they should be added in earlier, it is still fine. Add in the tomatoes, too. (OK. Add in the tomatoes.) Well, add in less cucumbers then. Add some soy sauce. All of it.

Add a bit of cumin seeds.

Add more salt; how much is up to you. Mix them well so that they are evenly seasoned. Keep stir-frying them. Keep stir-frying to make sure they are cooked evenly. I am about to add in some chili oil. (Chili oil? All of it?) No, it would be too spicy. It is better if I just add a little bit. Sometimes, we have to take care of the details. For example, when stir-frying the ingredients, it is not appropriate to use the spatula to flip outward. You must flip inward like this. It represents gathering the energy, luck and auspiciousness.

(Master, do they have ketchup in the Himalayas?) No. (Then what do they use?) Normally, they use eggplants, chilies, cilantro and potatoes. They

don't have much to choose from. (Does that mean ours is better then?) Well, we are just trying to create something new. We can't add too much of it, or it will be too sweet. Keep stir-frying as necessary.

Making the side dish: 1. Heat the pan and add cooking oil. 2. Add the green chilies, onions, salt and Szechuan peppercorns. 3. Add in dried tofu, eggplants, potatoes, tomatoes and cucumbers, then stir-fry. 4. Season with soy sauce, salt, cumin and chili oil. 5. Keep stir-frying so it is evenly flavored.

This is the side dish to go with the cold noodles. These are machine-pressed noodles. Do you understand? (You mean using a machine to press the noodles?) Anyway, you won't understand even if I explain. Fine, go home and ask your mom. (Alright.) This kid has never cooked before. The noodles were coiled up into a lump. First, loosen them up, otherwise they will stick together like a loaf. Loosen up the noodles and put them into the pot. Stir the noodles with a pair of chopsticks to prevent them from sticking to the bottom of the pot. Don't cook too many noodles at one time otherwise the noodles will stick to the pot.

I always like eating noodles and I like to cook when I am free. But I have been busy recently. This is a cold noodle dish. Do you remember its name? "Himalayan Cold Noodles." On the Qinghai-Tibet Plateau, there is the Himalayas.

Boiling noodles is a crucial step. We must use high heat and lots of water. These are wide noodles which need more water to cook. Don't overcook them, 80% cooked is fine. Otherwise, the noodles would be too soft and mushy. The color of the noodles is turning off-white, right? This is a strainer, or a sieve. This one is a bit too big for this. Alright, here goes. Now I am going to rinse them in a bowl of tap water. The noodles will cool down quickly. Then I will leave the noodles in a strainer to drain the excess water. Put aside the noodles for the next step.

Add in green onion oil and white sesame seeds. I have added in the sesame seeds and Szechuan peppercorns. Here I have some crushed cashew nuts. Add in all the cilantro, spring onions and soy sauce. Also, add in some

cardamom-infused soy sauce. Mix well.

Tip: Hand-mixed noodles taste better.

Instructions: 1. Loosen up the noodles and cook them in water. 2. When the noodles are 80% cooked, rinse them in cold water. 3. Lastly, drain the excess water and set aside for the next step. 4. Add in green onion oil, sesame seeds, Szechuan peppercorns, spring onion, cilantro and crushed cashew nuts. 5. Add in the soy sauce and cardamom soy sauce. 6. Thoroughly mix the seasonings with the noodles. Top with the side dish and serve. Success!  
Himalayan Cold Noodles.

Tip: Serve with side dishes.

This is my Himalayan Cold Noodles. It has been successfully made. Do you know how to do it now? If you don't, I will do it again next time. OK. Thank you, everybody!

(Come on. Let's eat!)

(This is good! What are you guys waiting for?)

(It really has the taste of the Himalayas!)

(What is "Himalayan taste?")

(Isn't it called Himalayan Cold Noodles?)

(I am full of energy now. Yes. I think we can skip our practice.)

(This restores our energy.)

(Thank you, Master! We "Like" it!)