

SPICE UP YOUR GRILLING GAME

By GRETCHEN McKAY
Pittsburgh Post-Gazette

Korean Gochujang hot sauce gives this barbecued chicken a spicy-sweet kick.

Gretchen McKay
photos/Pittsburgh Post-Gazette-TNS



Now that it's officially barbecue season, you might be looking for a few new recipes to freshen up your family's grill offerings. If they love anything and everything spicy, and feel equally passionate about Asian food, this easy recipe from Simply Recipes' inaugural digital issue could be a great place to start.

Made with one of the more economical parts of a chicken — bone-in thighs — it gets a sweet and peppery kick from gochujang, a spicy paste used in Korean cooking that's made from fermented red chilies and fermented soybeans. It's paired with a crunchy cucumber salad that whips together in minutes and cools the palate with its refreshing mix of rice vinegar and soy.



A crisp and cool cucumber salad is a perfect side for spicy Gochujang chicken.

You can find gochujang in most Asian markets and larger grocery stores. (It comes in a tub, and those with wheat allergies should note that it is not gluten-free.) A seedless cucumber works best in the salad, but no worries if all you have is a regular cuke — it will taste just as fresh and crunchy. Also feel free to substitute boneless, skinless thighs for bone-in for a quicker cook time.

It's tough to imagine there will be any, but leftovers will

keep for three to four days in the refrigerator.

GRILLED GOCHUJANG CHICKEN THIGHS WITH CUCUMBER SALAD

For chicken
½ cup gochujang
¼ cup maple syrup
¼ cup apple juice

2 tablespoons soy sauce
2 teaspoons sesame oil
2 cloves garlic, grated or minced
½-inch piece fresh ginger, grated or minced
8 bone-in, skin-on chicken thighs
Chopped chives, sliced scallions and toasted sesame seeds, for garnish
2 cups cooked rice, for serving
For cucumber salad
1 tablespoon soy sauce
2 tablespoons rice vinegar
1 tablespoon sugar
1 English (seedless) cucumber, sliced thin
Generous pinch of red chili powder
Generous pinch of sesame seeds
2 green onions, chopped

Make the paste: Place the gochujang, maple syrup, apple juice, sesame oil, garlic and ginger in a medium bowl or measuring cup. Whisk to combine. Place ½ cup of this paste in a small bowl and reserve the rest for basting while grilling.

Place chicken thighs in a large shallow pan. Using a pastry brush or spoon, lightly brush both sides of the chicken with the paste. (To avoid contamination from raw chicken, discard the rest of the sauce you just used.)

Let the chicken sit at room temperature while you heat up the grill. This will allow the chicken thighs to come to room temperature before grilling.

Using a paper towel and tongs, oil your clean grill grates with canola, vegetable, or another high heat oil.

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ANN BLOOM
NUTRITION:
IT'S ALL GOOD

Digging into the details of dairy

June is National Dairy Month, and of all the food groups it may be the most misunderstood.

Dairy includes, of course, milk (cow, goat, sheep, etc.) — whole, reduced fat, low-fat and nonfat, cheese, cottage cheese, yogurt, ice cream and fortified soy milk. However, it doesn't include items such as sour cream, butter, cream, or cream cheese. Why? Although these items are made from dairy products and found in the dairy section of the store, their fat content, compared to the amount of calcium they contain (if any), eliminates them from the dairy group.

Calcium is the nutrient found in dairy foods that our bodies need to build strong bones and teeth. Although calcium is found in other foods such as leafy greens (i.e. broccoli and kale) and almonds, the amount these foods contain is too low to justify their placement in the dairy food group. Therefore, they are placed in other food groups — leafy greens in the vegetable food group, for example. Foods are grouped based on the primary nutrient they contain. In this case, calcium (and the amount) is the nutrient used to classify dairy foods and their placement within the dairy food group.

Soy milk, if it is fortified (meaning calcium and other vitamins are added) can be included in the dairy group, even though it is not made from animal milk. "Milks," or milk drinks, made from hemp, rice, coconut, almond or other plant-based liquids are not included in the dairy group because they do not contain calcium and the other vitamins and nutrients contained in dairy milk. Some may be fortified; consumers should read the labels to see if the product they are interested in is fortified or not.

The nutrients in the dairy group include calcium, potassium, Vitamin D, protein, Vitamin A, riboflavin, Vitamin B12 and others. Calcium promotes bone health and development in children and adolescents, and helps prevent osteoporosis in adults. Most individuals do not consume enough dairy products. Low-fat or fat-free dairy products are preferred from a nutritional standpoint since they are lower in saturated fat. According to the American Heart Association, a diet high in saturated fat can contribute to heart disease. Low-fat or fat-free dairy products contain as much calcium as their full-fat relatives.

The amount one needs from the dairy group every day depends on age, gender and physical activity level. In general, according to the U.S. Dietary Guidelines for Americans 2020-25, the amount is 3 cups or cup equivalents. A cup of dairy is 8 ounces of milk or yogurt, or 1½ ounces of cheese, a half-cup of cottage cheese or 8 ounces of

Enjoying the lovely lilac time of year



WENDY SCHMIDT
BETWEEN THE ROWS

Lilac time. What a lovely time of year! The scientific world will never be able to nail what lilacs really smell like for their room deodorizer. They should just stop disappointing us!

Lilac (*Syringa*) is one of 12 currently recognized species of woody plants in the olive family. Native to southeast Europe and middle Asia, lilacs have become common in temperate zones all over the world.

The name lilac comes from the Persian word *lilaq*, which means "flower." Purple lilac has the stronger scent. Lilacs were in George Washington and Thomas Jefferson's colonial gardens.

Woody perennials are what can be collectively known as "yard bushes," "landscape assets and accents" or "landscaper's best friends." Different yard bushes are useful in different situations. Situa-



Ryan Somma/Flickr

Lilacs come in seven colors, but purple is the most common.

tions change due to sun exposure, pH of the soil, and personal preference. In the next few columns, I'll explore some of the more desirable "yard bushes."

The grape cuttings I took last fall are now starting to leaf out, as are the rose cuttings. The grapes will hopefully grow up to be part

of the arbor, sharing space with the vines already there.

The rose cuttings will find a place in the parking strip by the street. I have an overwhelming desire to take and grow cuttings. This must soon stop. I seem to have a 10-acre imagination stuck on a small city lot.

Garden chores for June

- Houseplants can be evicted for the summer to live on a shady porch. This gives you a chance to check thoroughly for pests and clip out dead leaves and branches. You could have a little green bower for reading or meditation.
- Watch for bagworms and deal with them, they especially like juniper and arbor vitae.
- Deadhead bulbs and spring perennials as soon as the blossoms fade.
- Thin seedlings to promote better growth.
- Early detection is essential for control of vegetable pests.
- Repeat plantings of corn and beans to extend the harvest season.
- Plant pumpkins now to have Jack-O-Lanterns by Halloween.
- Stop harvesting asparagus when the stalks become thin.

Happy gardening and thanks for reading!

■ Wendy Schmidt is a longtime gardener. She lives in La Grande.

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