

Keep the crisp, lose the labor in these Super Bowl wings

By ALISON LADMAN
Associated Press

Come Super Bowl Sunday, we all love a heaping platter of wings. They've got to be crunchy. They've got to be a little bit greasy. They've got to be so delicious we can't stop eating even after we know we've eaten too many.

What we don't love about the day of the big game? The work involved in making those wings a reality. Because perfectly crisped and seasoned wings typically require a fair amount of effort, not to mention vats of hot oil. And dealing with that is so much less fun than cracking a beer on the couch with your friends.

So we created these hands-off chicken wings that require almost no effort from you. Yet, they are every bit as crispy and addictive as a traditional recipe.

The secret is baking powder. You start the recipe a few hours ahead of when you want to serve the wings. Just toss the wings in a large bowl with some salt, pepper and baking powder, then refrigerate them for a while.



AP Photo/Matthew Mead

These wings require almost no effort from you. The secret is baking powder. The baking powder reacts with the skin, helping to draw out moisture.

The baking powder reacts with the skin, helping to draw out moisture. Less moisture equals more crisp!

When it's time to cook, you just arrange the wings on a wire rack set over a rimmed baking sheet. The rack keeps the air circulating around the wings and keeps them

up and out of any liquid that drips onto the pan. Again, less liquid (and more air) is key to getting the skin perfectly crisp. When the wings are done, we like to dunk them first in our honey-Sriracha sauce, then in our cilantro-sour cream dip. But if you'd prefer the more traditional

Buffalo sauce and blue cheese, go for it!

Alison Ladman is a chef, food writer and recipe developer for The Associated Press. She also owns The Crust and Crumb Baking Company in Concord, New Hampshire.

HANDS-OFF PARTY WINGS

Start to finish: 3 1/2 hours (15 minutes active)
Makes: 30 wings

For the wings:

- 2 tablespoons baking powder
- 1 teaspoon kosher salt
- 1/2 teaspoon ground black pepper
- 5 pounds chicken wings, split and wing tips removed

For the honey-Sriracha sauce:

- 1/3 cup soy sauce
- 3 tablespoons Sriracha
- 3 tablespoons honey
- 1 1/2 tablespoons minced fresh garlic
- 1 1/2 tablespoons toasted sesame oil

For cilantro-sour cream dip:

- 3/4 cup sour cream
- 3 tablespoons chopped fresh cilantro
- 3 tablespoons rice vinegar
- 3 scallions, white and green parts, finely chopped

Line 2 baking sheets with foil, then arrange a wire rack over the foil. Coat the rack with cooking spray.

In a large bowl, stir together the baking powder, salt and black pepper. Add the wings and toss to coat evenly. Spread the chicken wings over the rack and refrigerate for 2 hours, uncovered.

When ready to cook, heat the oven to 375 F. Bake the chicken wings for 60 to 70 minutes, flipping them halfway through, or until very crispy and golden brown.

While the wings bake, prepare the sauces. For each sauce, combine all ingredients in a small bowl and mix until uniform. Serve the wings on a platter accompanied by the sauces for dunking.

Nutrition information per wing: 110 calories; 60 calories from fat (54 percent of total calories); 7 g fat (2.5 g saturated; 0 g trans fats); 50 mg cholesterol; 400 mg sodium; 3 g carbohydrate; 0 g fiber; 2 g sugar; 8 g protein.



AP Photo/Matthew Mead

This simple salad features crunchy cucumbers enhanced with just a bit of citrus, soy sauce and a few other Thai ingredients.

After months of heavy eating, lighten up with taste of Thai

By KATIE WORKMAN
Associated Press

I love every bite of the holidays. I loved the mashed potatoes and the pies and the combread stuffing and everything else. And I'm not going to look back with regret.

I am, however, not going to continue eating this way indefinitely. And this salad is why I'm not so sad about that.

Lots of us are crazy about Thai food, what with all those bright, vibrant flavors, exciting textures and the play of sweet and sour and salty happening in so many ways. And classic Thai ingredients like lemongrass, chilies and coconut milk are now popping up at grocers all over the country. You'll find it's fun and easy to work them into your home cooking.

This simple salad features crunchy cucumbers enhanced with just a bit of citrus, soy sauce and a few other Thai ingredients. Cilantro is an herb people usually love or hate; few people feel "meh" about it. So if it's not your thing, or someone at the table doesn't like it, serve it on the side and let people add it to their own salads as they wish. You also could substitute Thai basil.

If you want to bump up the flavor even more, substitute fish sauce for half of the soy sauce. It will add a layer of delicious pungency to the dish.

Katie Workman has written two cookbooks focused on easy, family-friendly cooking, "Dinner Solved!" and "The Mom 100 Cookbook." She blogs at <http://www.themom100.com/about-katie-workman/>

THAI CUCUMBER SALAD

Start to finish: 15 minutes
Servings: 4

- 2 large English cucumbers
- 1 jalapeno pepper
- 2 teaspoons minced shallots
- 2 tablespoons low-sodium soy sauce
- 2 tablespoons lime juice
- 1 teaspoon sugar
- 2 tablespoons chopped cilantro leaves
- 1/4 cup salted cocktail peanuts, lightly crushed

Peel the cumpers, then slice them in half lengthwise. Using a teaspoon, scrape down the center of each half to remove any seeds. Slice the cucumber halves crosswise into thin slices. A mandoline is best, but a knife is fine. Trim the jalapeno, slice in half lengthwise, then remove the seeds before mincing.

In a large bowl, combine the jalapeno, shallots, soy sauce, lime juice and sugar, then stir to combine. Add the cucumbers and toss to combine. Transfer the mixture to a serving bowl or platter, then top with the cilantro and the peanuts.

Nutrition information per serving: 80 calories; 45 calories from fat (56 percent of total calories); 5 g fat (1 g saturated; 0 g trans fats); 0 mg cholesterol; 320 mg sodium; 7 g carbohydrate; 3 g fiber; 3 g sugar; 5 g protein.



AP Photo/Eric Risberg

In this Dec. 16 photo, people make their way past a Chinatown bank in San Francisco.

Step into San Francisco's Chinatown

By MICHELLE LOCKE
Associated Press

SAN FRANCISCO — The best plan for tackling San Francisco's Chinatown is no plan at all. Simply wandering the wide streets and narrow alleys will take you where you need to go.

Whether you just happen to be in town or are visiting for something specific like the Super Bowl or Lunar New Year — the Year of the Monkey dawns Feb. 8 — spending a few hours in the second-largest Chinatown in the United States (behind New York City) is always worthwhile.

Visit early and you'll feel the rush of everyday life as the food markets and bakeries hum with activity — this is a real community as well as a tourist attraction. Visit at dusk and Chinatown takes on a magical glow, the lanterns strung across Grant Street glowing red and the curio shop windows ablaze in a glitter of possibilities.

Here's a quick guide to getting the most out of your stroll.

How to get there

A good place to start is the much-photographed gate at Bush Street and Grant Avenue. This is Instagram central and a short walk from Union Square. You can also ride the cable car to Chinatown via either the Powell-Hyde or Powell-Mason lines. Cable cars make many stops; two possibilities for alighting are at Washington and Mason streets or Powell and California. Tickets, \$7, can be purchased at the turnaround at Powell and Market streets or in advance online. You don't have to queue at the turnaround to board; you can walk a few blocks up the line — look for the brown and white signs indicating stops. Be aware, though, that you may have trouble getting a seat when it's busy.

Where to eat

Tourists and locals alike rejoiced when Sam Wo's recently reopened. Before it closed in 2012, the restaurant



AP Photo/Eric Risberg

In this Jan. 7 photo, two women walk past a Chinatown mural in San Francisco.

had operated for more than 100 years on Washington Street and was known as a place for no-frills Cantonese fare where customers were once insulted by the "rudest waiter in the world," the late Edsel Ford Fong. Sam Wo's reopened in October at 713 Clay St., between Grant and Kearny. Try the "jook," rice porridge served with a variety of toppings. Other standbys include House of Nanking, 919 Kearny St., and Great Eastern Restaurant, 649 Jackson St., known for its Cantonese-style seafood dishes.

What to do

Grant is the main drag, but if you want to see the more workaday side to Chinatown, take a walk on Stockton Street, known for its produce and live animal markets. Explore the tiny side streets where you'll find everything from dive bars to tea houses to traditional Chinese apothecaries. Waverly Place, between Washington and Sacramento streets, is home to several temples including Tien Hau, which has a different style on each floor culminating with a temple dedicated to the Goddess of Heaven, 125 Waverly

Place, free but donations appreciated. Another interesting temple is Kong Chow Temple, known for its colorful altars, and in the same building as the Chinatown post office, 955 Stockton St.

The Golden Gate Fortune Cookie Factory is open seven days a week, 56 Ross Alley. Admission is free, but you need to pay 50 cents to take a picture.

Chinese New Year, understandably, is big here, with banners, fireworks, food and flowers. This year, the two-week celebration wraps up with the traditional parade on Feb. 20. This year's flower fair will be held Jan. 30-31, from 10 a.m. to 8 p.m. on Saturday and 9 a.m. to 6 p.m. Sunday. Location: Grant Avenue from Clay to Broadway, and Pacific, Jackson and Washington streets between Stockton and Kearny.

Looking to add a little scholarship to your stroll? For a deeper dive into Chinatown history, consider one of the guided tours offered by the Chinese Cultural Center. Tickets are around \$30 for adults and reservations are required. <http://www.c-c-c.org/education/chinatown/>