

Silken Chawanmushi

Chicken, Shiitake & Spring Onion

RFP-P02-R01

Function: Coagulation
Serves: 4
Prep: 25 minutes
Cook: 15–18 minutes

Equipment: 4 x 250 ml heatproof cups or ramekins, steamer or deep frying pan with lid

Why this recipe belongs

Chawanmushi is one of the clearest ways to understand gentle egg coagulation. The egg is not being scrambled. It is not being browned. It is being diluted with seasoned stock and heated only until the protein network is strong enough to hold the liquid. That makes texture entirely dependent on: egg-to-liquid ratio, heat, filtration and steaming intensity.

Ingredients

Filling

120 g boneless chicken thigh, cut into 1 cm pieces
60 g fresh shiitake mushrooms, thinly sliced
5 g neutral oil
1 g fine sea salt
Custard
200 g whole egg, approximately 4 large eggs without shells
650 g cooled dashi
18 g light soy sauce
12 g mirin
2 g fine sea salt

Finish

20 g spring onion, very thinly sliced
a few drops sesame oil, optional

Method

1. Heat a small frying pan over medium heat. Add the oil, chicken and the 1 g filling salt. Cook for 3–4 minutes, stirring, until the chicken reaches 75°C internally.

2. Add the shiitake. Cook for another 2 minutes until just softened. Remove from the heat and cool.

3. Divide the chicken and mushroom mixture between 4 ramekins. Combine the eggs in a bowl. Stir gently with chopsticks or a fork just until the whites and yolks are blended.

4. Do not whip air into the eggs. In a separate jug, combine the cooled dashi, soy sauce, mirin and salt.

Pour the seasoned dashi gradually into the egg while stirring gently.

5. Pass the mixture through a fine strainer. Skim away surface bubbles. Divide evenly between the ramekins.

6. Cover each ramekin loosely with foil. Bring the steamer water to a gentle simmer.

7. Add the ramekins. Steam over medium heat for 2 minutes. Reduce immediately to low heat.

8. Continue steaming for 10-13 minutes. Check the custard: it should tremble when moved, look set around the edge, remain slightly softer in the centre, and show no large bubbles or holes.

9. Remove from the steamer. Rest for 3 minutes.

10. Finish with spring onion.

Target

The texture should be: · silken · barely firm · spoonable · completely smooth · The custard should not resemble baked egg.

Test-kitchen failure check

Rubbery or porous: heat too high. Watery liquid around custard: undercooked or filling released excess liquid. Large holes: mixture overheated or boiled. Custard too firm: reduce steaming time or increase dashi slightly in the next batch.

Why our ratio works

The egg-to-dashi ratio here is approximately 1:3.25 by weight. That deliberately sits between firmer 1:3 examples and softer 1:4 versions. It gives enough stability for a home cook while retaining the characteristic trembling texture.

Storage

Best eaten immediately. If necessary, refrigerate promptly and reheat gently by steaming. Do not boil during reheating.



Swiss Meringue Kisses

Vanilla & Lemon Zest

RFP-P02-R04

Function: Aeration
Makes: approximately 30 small meringues
Prep: 20 minutes
Bake: 75–90 minutes
Oven: 100°C conventional / 90°C fan

Ingredients

120 g egg whites
200 g caster sugar
1 g cream of tartar
5 g vanilla extract
finely grated zest of ½ lemon, optional

Equipment

completely grease-free heatproof bowl
saucepan
stand mixer or electric beaters
thermometer
baking trays
baking paper

Method

Heat the oven to 100°C conventional / 90°C fan. Line 2 baking trays. Combine the egg whites and sugar in a heatproof bowl.

Place over a saucepan containing barely simmering water. The bowl must not touch the water. Whisk gently but continuously.

Heat until the sugar feels completely dissolved between your fingers and the mixture reaches 72°C.

Remove immediately from the heat. Transfer to a stand mixer. Add the cream of tartar.

Whip on medium-high speed for 5–7 minutes. Continue until the bowl is close to room temperature,

the meringue is glossy, stiff peaks hold and the mixture does not slump.

Add vanilla and lemon zest, if using. Whip only long enough to combine. Pipe or spoon 3 cm mounds onto the trays.

Bake for 75–90 minutes. Turn the oven off. Leave the door slightly ajar.

Allow the meringues to cool in the oven for another 30 minutes. Cool completely before storing.

Target

The meringues should have: · crisp dry exterior · very light interior · no syrup leaking · no coarse sugar crystals

Why Swiss meringue

Heating the whites and sugar before whipping gives a stable foam and ensures the sugar is dissolved before the main aeration step. · King Arthur likewise heats Swiss meringue to at least 160°F/71°C before whipping.

Test-kitchen failure check

Will not whip: fat or yolk contamination. Sticky exterior: humidity or insufficient drying. Large cracks: oven too hot. Weeping syrup: sugar not fully dissolved or meringue underbaked.

Optional native ingredient test

For one test tray only, rub: 0.25 g lemon myrtle powder into the caster sugar before heating. Compare directly with the plain version. Do not increase unless it clearly improves the citrus aroma without producing bitterness or a dusty finish.

Storage

Store completely cooled meringues airtight at room temperature for up to 5 days. Humidity is the enemy.



Slow-Roasted Tomato Confit

Garlic, Oregano & Olive Oil

RFP-P05-R01

Transformation: Fresh tomato → partial dehydration → concentrated soft tomato
Serves: 6 as a side or component
Prep: 15 minutes
Cook: 2–2½ hours
Oven: 130°C conventional / 110°C fan

Why this recipe belongs

This is concentration without taking the tomato all the way to dry. The tomato still remains soft. But some of its water leaves. That gives us: sweeter flavour, denser texture, stronger aroma and greater tomato intensity.

Ingredients

1 kg ripe cherry or grape tomatoes
35 g extra-virgin olive oil
8 g fine sea salt
8 g caster sugar
3 garlic cloves, lightly crushed
2 g dried oregano
1 g freshly ground black pepper

Method

1. Heat the oven to 130°C conventional / 110°C fan. Halve the tomatoes through the equator. Place cut-side up on a large lined baking tray.

2. Drizzle evenly with olive oil. Sprinkle with salt, sugar, oregano and pepper. Tuck the garlic between the tomatoes rather than placing it directly on top.

3. Roast for 2-2½ hours. Rotate the tray once. The tomatoes are ready when the edges are wrinkled, some water has evaporated, the centres remain soft and the flavour is clearly more concentrated, without the fruit becoming leathery.

4. Cool slightly before serving.

Target

The tomatoes should be: · sweet · savoury · jammy · still juicy enough to collapse under a fork

Why only 8 g sugar?

Some traditional and contemporary confit-style recipes use considerably more sugar. · For this chapter, we want concentration to reveal the tomato's own sweetness rather than turn it into a sweet preserve. · The sugar is therefore a seasoning and caramelisation aid, not the principal flavour.

Test-kitchen comparison

Roast 200 g tomatoes without sugar beside the main batch. · Compare: · acidity · browning · sweetness · tomato intensity · Uses · Serve with: · ricotta · grilled fish · pasta · toast · roast vegetables

Storage

Refrigerate airtight for up to 4 days. Do not store homemade garlic-and-oil mixtures at room temperature.