



Asian Firecracker Cauliflower Bites with Sweet & Spicy Firecracker Sauce

By Dylan Sabuco

Prep Time 20 / **Cook Time** 20 / **Serves** 4 - 6

Fun-Da-Mentals Kitchen Skills

stir: to mix together two or more ingredients with a spoon or spatula, usually in a circle pattern, or figure eight, or in whatever direction you like!

measure: to calculate the specific amount of an ingredient required using a measuring tool (like measuring cups or spoons).

knife skills: Bear Claw (growl), Pinch, Plank, and Bridge (look out for trolls) and Rock and Saw.

chop: to cut something into small, rough pieces using a blade.

mix: to thoroughly combine two or more ingredients until uniform in texture.

sauté: to cook or brown food in a pan containing a small quantity of butter, oil, or other fat.

simmer: to cook a food gently, usually in a liquid, until softened.

Equipment

- Large skillet
- Medium saucepan
- Mixing bowls
- Cutting board
- Kid-safe knife
- Measuring spoons
- Measuring cups
- Wooden spoon

- Whisk
- Spatula turner or tongs
- Plate
- Paper towels

Ingredients

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- 1 small head of cauliflower (yellow, purple, or white all work fine)
- 2 eggs **** (for EGG ALLERGY sub 2 T ground flaxseeds + 1/4 C water, stirred)****
- 1 tsp salt
- 1/2 tsp ground black pepper
- 1 tsp garlic powder
- 1/2 tsp ground ginger
- 1 C panko bread crumbs **** (for GLUTEN ALLERGY sub gluten-free panko-style coating)****
- 1/4 C all-purpose flour **** (for GLUTEN ALLERGY sub 1/4 C gluten-free/nut-free all-purpose flour)****
- 1 pinch salt
- 1 pinch ground black pepper
- 1/4 C vegetable oil ******
- Sauce:
- 1/2 C water
- 1 tsp red pepper flakes **** (Omit for NIGHTSHADE ALLERGY)****
- 1/2 C granulated sugar
- 2 tsp cornstarch
- 1 tsp ground ginger
- 1/2 tsp garlic powder
- 1 pinch salt
- 1 pinch ground black pepper

Food Allergen Substitutions

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Gluten/Wheat: Substitute gluten-free panko-style coating for panko bread crumbs. Substitute gluten-free/nut-free all-purpose flour.

Egg: For 2 eggs, substitute 2 T ground flaxseeds + 1/4 C water and stir until absorbed and thickened.

Soy: Substitute canola oil or other nut-free high-smoking point oil for vegetable oil.

Nightshade: Omit red pepper flakes in the sauce.

Instructions

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intro

"Nǐ hǎo" (Nee how) or "Hello" in Chinese! Firecracker cauliflower is the Sticky Fingers Cooking® version of the Firecracker Shrimp appetizer. Simply put, it is shrimp that is breaded and fried, then tossed in a sweet and spicy chili sauce. This recipe will follow that same formula, but we will be using cauliflower instead of shrimp for a vegetarian twist.

chop

Start by roughly chopping **1 head of cauliflower** into bite-sized chunks. You are going for roughly the size of a small chicken-nugget-sized cauliflower chunk. Place the cauliflower in a large bowl.

season + toss

Measure and add the following ingredients to the bowl of cauliflower: **2 eggs, 1 teaspoon salt, 1/2 teaspoon black pepper, 1 teaspoon garlic powder,** and **1/2 teaspoon ground ginger**. Toss to coat the cauliflower.

superstar food spotlight

Cauliflower is quite a vegetable. A single floret of cauliflower contains 10 percent of your daily vitamin C, even more vitamin C than oranges contain. Cauliflower also comes in four vibrant colors, can be cooked using various methods, and every bite makes your gums and skin healthier.

measure + toss

Measure the following ingredients into a separate bowl: **1 cup panko bread crumbs, 1/4 cup flour, 1 pinch of salt,** and **1 pinch of black pepper**. Whisk a few times to combine. Then, toss each piece of cauliflower individually in the seasoned flour mixture. Place the coated cauliflower on a cutting board or other flat surface while you finish coating all the cauliflower.

sauté + stir

Heat **1/4 cup vegetable oil** in a large skillet over medium heat. Once heated, add the breaded cauliflower in a single layer. Sauté for 4 to 5 minutes on the first side, then flip the cauliflower over and continue to cook for another 2 to 3 minutes or until the cauliflower is golden brown. Try counting to 10 in Chinese while you stir: 1 yī (eee), 2 èr (arr), 3 sān (sahn), 4 sì (ssuh), 5 wǔ (woo), 6 liù (lee-oh), 7 qī (tchee), 8 bā (bah), 9 jiǔ (j-oh), 10 shí (shir).

absorb

Place the golden brown cauliflower on a paper-towel-lined plate before serving to absorb any excess oil.

measure + simmer

Now we'll make the sauce. Measure the following ingredients and pour them into a saucepan: **1/2 cup water, 1 teaspoon red pepper flakes, 1/2 cup sugar, 2 teaspoons cornstarch, 1 teaspoon ground ginger, 1/2 teaspoon garlic powder, 1 pinch of salt, and 1 pinch of black pepper**. Bring the mixture to a simmer over medium heat for 10 minutes, stirring occasionally.

drizzle + devour

Once the sauce is thickened and sticky, drizzle it all over your Asian Firecracker Cauliflower Bites. Eat and enjoy!

Featured Ingredient: Ginger!

Hi! I'm Ginger!

"My name is Ginger, and I'm happy to make your acquaintance! You may have tasted me in lots of sweet foods and drinks, like gingerbread, ginger snap cookies, pumpkin pie, and ginger ale. But, I also add my unique flavor to savory dishes, like stir-fries and potstickers! If you use my fresh rhizome or root in a recipe, delicately peel my beige, papery skin (the back of a metal spoon works great!) and grate my juicy flesh into the food! I also come in a dried and ground form and as crystallized ginger. As a bonus, I might even make your tummy ache feel better!"

History

Ginger is a native plant of India and China and is a common cooking spice used throughout the world.

Ginger is one of the oldest plants used for medicine.

Which spices do you think are most commonly found on kitchen tables around the world? If you said salt and pepper, you'd be right! It truly depends on where you are in the world. In the ninth century, Europeans placed powdered ginger on the table alongside salt and pepper.

A long, long time ago, ginger was used to preserve food and keep it from getting rotten.

Greeks used to eat ginger wrapped in bread to treat digestive problems. After a while, they added ginger

to bread dough to create the first recipe for gingerbread!

Ginger grows in many tropical countries, including the Caribbean islands. However, ginger from Jamaica is considered by many to be the best! Do you know where your ginger originated?

Ginger is also grown in Florida, Hawaii, and along the eastern coast of Texas.

Anatomy & Etymology

Related to cardamom and turmeric, the ginger plant is part of the Zingiberaceae or Ginger family. We use the "rhizome" part of the plant, which are underground stems. Sometimes we can eat the rhizome part of a plant, and sometimes we can't! For example, bamboo plants are rooted underground by rhizomes, but the rhizome is not the part of the plant we eat—instead, we eat the bamboo shoots that come up out of the ground. But we do eat the rhizomes of plants such as ginger, turmeric, and arrowroot!

Rhizomes are also the storage compartment of the plant. What do rhizomes store? Starches, proteins, and other nutrients—that's why we eat this part of the plant (because it's nutritious!).

Ginger Root is characterized by its aroma: it smells strong, sweet, and woody. Its skin is not something we eat—we peel the skin to reveal ginger's coarse, stringy, aromatic flesh.

The ginger plant looks like a reed and has been used in the kitchen and as medicine for the past 5,000 years. A ginger plant can reach three to four feet tall.

The word "ginger" comes from late Old English "gingifer," from medieval Latin "gingiber," from Greek "zingiberis," and from Pali, a Middle Indo-Aryan language "singivera."

How to Pick, Buy, & Eat

Fresh ginger is available year-round, where you can find it in the grocery store produce section.

When selecting fresh ginger, choose robust, firm roots that feel heavy, and have a spicy fragrance and smooth skin.

Ginger root length is a sign of age, and mature rhizomes will be spicier and more fibrous than younger roots.

Ginger should not be cracked or withered—these are signs of aged ginger past its prime.

To store ginger root, wrap it in a paper towel or plastic wrap or put it in a plastic bag before placing it in the refrigerator for two to three weeks. You can also freeze it for up to three months.

According to many chefs and cooks, fresh ginger is best and can be added to sauces, soups, and stews.

Dried and powdered ginger has a more spicy, intense flavor and is often used in baked desserts like gingerbread, gingersnaps, and ginger cake.

Ginger can be sliced, minced, grated, or left whole to steep in recipes (minced ginger has the most intense flavor). It can also be dried, pickled, crystallized, candied, or preserved.

Ginger tastes sweet, spicy, and pungent and increases flavor in a range of dishes, from stir-fried beef or tofu to ginger tea.

Nutrition

Ginger continues to be used to treat nausea and to prevent seasickness.

Ginger may also have anti-inflammatory properties and increase digestive function.

Despite its natural properties, any medicinal use of ginger should be discussed with a doctor. Limiting the amount you take will help avoid heartburn. It may also interfere with anticoagulant medicine.