

Sensei Says

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Since I only have a chance to write about one subject a month, I have found that my discussion on etiquette has been going on for along time. I think it is time for a change.

At first, I was going to discuss "pain," but after much thought I decided to give you a recipe for pleasure instead. No, I'm not being philosophical this time, I mean a real recipe. With the barbecue season upon us I have decided to share with you what I believe to be the best food available on the planet. It is one of Korea's most popular dishes, called "bulgogi."

No doubt, there are as many different recipes for this dish as there are ways to spell "bulgogi." The following recipe comes from Mr. Jae Ho Park (the Korean master who taught my teacher taekwondo and hapkido). It is the best I've ever had. In fact, during his visit to Eugene last month, Shihan Dallas mentioned that he ate bulgogi nearly every meal on a recent trip to Korea. None of it could come close to the flavor of this recipe!

This is a recipe I grew up with. But, I became a vegetarian about ten years ago and quit eating bulgogi. Sadly, I had given up the idea of ever having it again. I even joked that bulgogi is the only reason good enough to kill a cow. In a stroke of brilliance I decided to try it with Portobello mushrooms (thinly sliced across the top to make burger size pieces). WOW! The cows are safe again!

Now, it may seem silly for me to go on and on about a simple meal. One taste will convince you that my ramblings are just the simple observations of one who has seen another side of life.

Bulgogi can be cooked on a frying pan if necessary (that's how the restaurants serve it), but it really doesn't do it justice. Other meats can also be used (whole boneless chicken breasts are incredible). One of the biggest difficulties in making beef bulgogi is getting the meat sliced correctly by the butcher. Conveniently, Sunrise Oriental Market carries pre-cut bulgogi beef in their meat section.

So, fire up the charcoal, here's the simple marinate recipe.

Mix together in a large bowl:

- 1 cup soy sauce
- 1/2 teaspoon black pepper
- 2 teaspoons garlic powder
- 2 Tablespoons toasted sesame seeds
- 3 Tablespoons sesame seed oil
- 3/4 Cup sugar
- 4 Tablespoons sake
- 6 green onions (diced)

Add to the marinate:

3 pounds of beef (sliced .05 to 1 on the meat slicer)

Add one piece of meat at a time being sure to cover thoroughly with sauce.

Allow meat to marinate about 20 minutes (longer is NOT better)

Barbecue until crisp. (Chopsticks work best for turning on the barbecue)

Serve over white rice with kimchee on the side. ENJOY!

Let me know what you think!

Next month, an in-depth discussion of pain.

- Alan Best