

Bibimbap Recipe

Bimbimbap is a super-popular dish made of rice, sauteed and seasoned vegetables, marinated beef and a fried egg, topped with a hot pepper paste called gochujang.

The literal translation of bibim is “mixed” and bap is “cooked rice.” Before eating it you’re supposed to mix everything all together for the best flavors.

This dish has many variations, from as simple as anything in your refrigerator to elaborate. The recipe is for “classic” bibimbap; if you ordered bibimbap in a Korean restaurant, such as The Koop or Kimchi, in town, you would probably get a colorful dish that contains all the popular ingredients.

We will make two types of bibimbap - one with the hot stone plate to keep the bibimbap warm until you finish and create toasted rice at the bottom for that extra chewy savory texture. The other is the same ingredients with a sunny side up egg on top in a large bowl.

Protein

For the meat, ground beef or bulgogi-style beef is most common. You can also use chicken bulgogi, spicy pork, or tofu for a vegan option.

Bulgogi meat or ground beef

- 8 ounces lean, tender beef, cut into thin strips
- 2 teaspoons soy sauce
- 1 teaspoon rice wine (or mirin)
- 1 teaspoon sugar
- 1 teaspoon sesame oil
- 1/2 teaspoon minced garlic

Firm Tofu: Cut the firm tofu into cubes. Pat dry with a paper towel, and lightly sprinkle with salt. Heat a skillet with enough oil to cover the pan. Add the tofu pieces and fry until all sides are golden brown.

The most common bibimbap vegetables

- 8 ounces soybean sprouts (kongnamul)
- 1 bunch spinach, about 8 ounces
- 1 Asian cucumber, or 2 small cucumbers, about 5 ounces

- 1 medium zucchini
- 4 ounces Shiitake mushrooms, but you can use any mushrooms you like
- 2 medium carrots or you can substitute red or orange bell peppers instead
- 1.5 teaspoons of minced garlic, divided
- 3 tablespoons of chopped scallions, divided
- Toasted sesame oil
- Toasted sesame seeds
- Salt
- 4 eggs
- Vegetable cooking oil
- Gochujang sauce

Short-grain white rice or sticky rice is better, but you can use any rice, or microwavable sticky rice for your convenience. For bibimbap rice, use less water to make rice.

Bibimbap sauce: For the store-bought gochujang, add some water to thin it out for easy mixing, and add a little bit of sugar and sesame oil.

- 4 tablespoons gochujang,
- 2 teaspoons sugar - adjust to taste, 1-3 teaspoons
- 1 tablespoon sesame oil
- 1 tablespoon water

You can also make a soy-based sauce for a mild taste called Yangnyeomjang:

- 4 tablespoons soy sauce
- 2 teaspoons sesame oil
- 1 teaspoon gochugaru, Korean red pepper flakes (you can skip this for mild flavor)
- 1 teaspoon toasted sesame seeds
- 1 teaspoon minced garlic
- 1 teaspoon sugar
- 2 - 3 scallions, finely chopped

Prepping Veggies

For the bean sprouts, wash them a few times, drain water, put them in a large pot half submerged under boiling water, and sprinkle salt on top. Bring it to a quick boil for 1 minute to blanch the bean sprouts. The lid must be on and quickly drain and shock with cold water. Squeeze the water out and mix it with seasonings (sesame oil, sesame seeds, salt, and minced garlic (you can skip this for mild flavor)).



Bush or Asian Cucumbers: Cut the cucumbers in half lengthwise and then thinly slice crosswise. Generously sprinkle salt (about 1/2 teaspoon) over the sliced cucumbers and set aside for 10 - 15 minutes. Squeeze out excess liquid. Toss with 1 tablespoon of chopped scallion, 1/2 teaspoon minced garlic, 1 teaspoon sesame oil, and 1/2 teaspoon sesame seeds.

Spinach bunch: soak spinach to remove dirt and wash it a few times. Blanch the spinach in salted boiling water only until wilted, about 40 seconds. Drain quickly and shock in cold water. Squeeze out water. Cut into 3-inch lengths. Toss with 1 tablespoon of chopped scallion, 1/2 teaspoon minced garlic, 1 teaspoon of sesame oil, 1/2 teaspoon of sesame seeds, and salt (about 1/2 teaspoon).

Shiitake Mushrooms: Thinly slice the mushrooms and sauté them in a lightly oiled skillet for 2 minutes over medium-high heat, sprinkling with salt (about 1/4 teaspoon). If you are using dried Shiitake mushrooms, you need to soak them in a bowl of water for 30 minutes, flip them over a few times to remove the dirt and squeeze water out.



Carrots: Thinly slice carrots and sauté in a lightly oiled skillet for 2 minutes over medium-high heat, sprinkling with salt (about 1/4 teaspoon).

Zucchini: Cut the zucchini in half lengthwise (cut into quarters if using a round zucchini). Then, cut crosswise into about 1/4 to 1/3-inch thick slices. Add the zucchini, garlic, and salt or fish sauce in a lightly oiled skillet. Cook for 2 to 3 minutes, stirring well over medium-high heat.

Radish: Peel off the skin and cut into round first and then thinly slice radish and sauté in a lightly oiled skillet for 2 minutes over medium-high heat, sprinkling with salt (about 1/4 teaspoon).

Onion: Thinly slice onion and sauté in a lightly oiled skillet for 2 minutes over medium-heat, sprinkling with salt (about 1/4 teaspoon). You can substitute radish with onion.

Assembling:

- Place a serving of rice in a large bowl. Nicely arrange a small amount of each prepared vegetable and protein over the rice. Drizzle a little sesame oil over. Top with an optional fried egg and serve with the sauce. Mix it well with a spoon. You can adjust gochujang sauce for a spicy flavor or Yangnyeomjang for a mild soy-based sauce.

Sample of vegetarian bibimbap dish



Koop's Bibimbap with carrots, bean sprouts, radish, spinach, shiitake mushrooms, and zucchini with ground beef and a fried egg over the white rice.



- **For hot stoneware/dolsot bibimbap:** Lightly oil a stone or earthenware bowl with a teaspoon of sesame oil over medium heat. Add a serving of cooked rice and arrange the toppings on top. Be careful as this dish is hot and heavy to handle.