

TO VEGETABLES  
**with love**

## Clay pot mushroom rice

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Cantonese bo zai fan traditionally has a scorched layer of rice at the bottom, which the heavy clay pot facilitates quite easily. The thickness of the pot means the rice will sizzle and crisp up evenly without burning too quickly. For my recipe, crisping the bottom is optional but if you choose to do it, stay close, listen to the sound of the sizzle, smell the aroma and if you detect any burning scents, take it off the heat immediately. At first, the rice will seem stuck to the pot, but let it cool for a while and it will be easier to peel off. To me, the scorched rice is the most coveted part of this dish.

I make this with vegetable stock for more flavour but you could just use water and season accordingly with salt and soy sauce/tamari.

Serves 4

300g (1 1/2 cups) medium grain or jasmine rice  
500ml (2 cups) vegetable stock (or water)  
300g mixed mushrooms such as fresh shiitake, king oyster/trumpet, oyster, beech, enoki, Swiss brown/cremini etcetera  
2 teaspoons cornflour/cornstarch  
1 tablespoon (4 teaspoons) tamari or soy sauce, plus more for drizzling  
1 tablespoon (4 teaspoons) sesame oil, plus more for drizzling  
sea salt and white pepper  
2 teaspoons shaoxing wine (omit for gluten free)  
6 thin slices fresh ginger (about 10g)  
2 scallions, finely sliced

Place the rice into a claypot or Dutch oven and rinse it 3 times until the water runs almost clear. Pour the stock over the rice and leave to soak for 10-20 minutes while you prepare the mushrooms.

For mushrooms with caps like shiitake, trumpets/king oyster or cremini/swiss browns, thinly slice them; if you have clusters such as enoki or beech, tear them into smaller bundles. Place them into a bowl and add the cornstarch/cornflour, tamari or soy sauce, sesame oil, 1/2 teaspoon sea salt, pinch of white pepper and shaoxing wine. Toss until well combined and coated.

Place the pot with the rice over medium high heat, add the ginger slices and bring to the boil. When bubbling, cover and reduce to lowest setting and cook for 10 minutes. Uncover, add the mushrooms and using chopsticks or a large spoon, stir the mushrooms through the rice. Drizzle with another 2-3 teaspoons of sesame oil and cover again and cook on lowest setting for 10 minutes.

Remove the lid, increase heat to medium high and cook for 4-5 minutes until you can hear it sizzling - this allows the bottom of the rice to become crispy. Turn off heat and drizzle with another 2 -3 teaspoons of soy sauce or tamari and top with scallions. You can skip this step if you don't care for the crispy rice.

Eat as is, or top with chili crisp, sriracha, sesame seeds, crispy shallots or furikake.