



ANSON MILLS

Vietnamese Rice and Chicken Porridge (Cháo Gà)

Yield

4 to 6 servings

Time

About 30 minutes to fry the shallots and about 1 hour to make the porridge

Cooking Remarks

The base of the porridge is Rich Homemade Chicken Stock tailored to fit the Vietnamese flavor profile by omitting the Western herbs (thyme and parsley), increasing the garlic to 10 cloves and adding 1 teaspoon of black peppercorns as well as 1.5 ounces fresh ginger, scrubbed well and thinly sliced. When skimming the fat off the chilled stock, leave a little in place for flavor.

If you have leftover porridge, refrigerate it in an airtight container for up to 3 days. Rewarm it in a saucepan over medium, adding stock or water as needed to thin the consistency, then adjust the seasoning with fish sauce or salt. You can't really overcook it—it's already overcooked.

Equipment Mise en Place

To fry the shallots, you will need a medium fine-mesh strainer; a medium heatproof bowl; and a wok or narrow, heavy-bottomed saucepan.

To make the porridge, you will need a digital kitchen scale, a large saucepan, and warmed serving bowls.

Ingredients

for the fried shallots

¾ cup peanut oil

8 ounces shallots, thinly sliced

Big pinch of fine sea salt

for the porridge

2 quarts Rich Homemade Chicken Stock, made without the thyme and parsley but with 10 garlic cloves, 1 teaspoon black peppercorns, and 1.5 ounces fresh ginger, scrubbed, thinly sliced, and lightly bruised; leave some fat on the stock when skimming

0.5 ounce fresh ginger, scrubbed and thinly sliced

⅔ cup Anson Mills Carolina Gold Rice, rinsed and drained

Poached chicken breasts from Rich Homemade Chicken Stock

2 tablespoons fish sauce, plus additional if needed

Fine sea salt (optional)

Freshly ground black pepper, for serving

Thinly sliced scallions and/or chopped fresh cilantro, for serving

Lime wedges, for serving

Directions

1. Fry the shallots: Set a medium fine-mesh strainer over a medium heatproof bowl. Line a plate with a doubled layer of paper toweling. Set both bowl and plate near the stove. In a wok or narrow, heavy-bottomed saucepan, heat the oil over medium-high heat until shimmering. Drop in a shallot slice—if it sizzles immediately, the oil is ready. Add the shallots; the amount of oil may seem too scant, but the shallots will reduce in volume as they cook. Fry, stirring frequently and adjusting the heat as needed to maintain a steady but not rapid bubbling action, until the shallots are deeply browned but one shade lighter than desired (they will continue to darken as they are drained); this should take 10 to 12 minutes, but timing depends on the burner and the cooking vessel. Pour the shallots and oil into the strainer. Shake the strainer and toss the shallots to drain off as much oil as possible, then turn the shallots onto the prepared plate. Sprinkle with the salt, toss, and distribute in an even layer. Set aside until ready to use or let cool, transfer to an airtight container, and store at room temperature for up to 3 days.

2. Make the porridge: In a large saucepan, bring the stock and ginger to a simmer over medium-high heat. Add the rice and return to a simmer, stirring frequently. Turn down the heat to medium-low, partially cover the pan, and cook, stirring occasionally and adjusting the heat as needed to maintain a gentle but steady simmer, until the rice is very soft and the grains are bloated and frayed, about 45 minutes. Add the poached chicken breasts and cook just until they are warmed through, 5 to 10 minutes, then transfer to a plate. Remove the pan from the heat and cover to keep the porridge hot. Using two forks or your fingers, shred the chicken breasts into bite-size pieces.

3. Remove and discard the ginger slices from the porridge, then stir in the fish sauce. Taste and season with additional fish sauce or with sea salt, if that's your preference. Ladle the porridge into warmed bowls, then divide the chicken among the bowls. Sprinkle each with fried shallots and scallions and/or cilantro, then grind on a generous amount of black pepper. Serve with lime wedges.