

Peppercorn Mélange Chicken and Udon Noodles in Lemon Grass-Sake Broth

The pairing of Peppercorn Mélange and sake adds heat and floral notes to this Japanese-inspired meal-in-one udon noodle bowl with grilled chicken, shitake mushrooms and vegetables.

Prep Time: 20 minutes

Cook Time: 25 minutes

- 2 teaspoons **McCormick® Gourmet Collection™ Peppercorn Mélange**, divided
- 1/2 teaspoon **McCormick® Gourmet Collection™ Sicilian Sea Salt**
- 1 1/4 pounds boneless skinless chicken breast halves
- 3 stalks **McCormick® Gourmet Collection™ Lemon Grass**
- 1 tablespoon sesame oil
- 4 heads baby bok choy, cut in half lengthwise
- 8 shitake mushrooms, sliced
- 5 cups chicken stock
- 1/3 cup dry sake (Japanese rice wine)
- 1/2 teaspoon **McCormick® Gourmet Collection™ Ground Ginger**
- 1/2 cup snow peas
- 1/4 cup each red and yellow bell pepper strips
- 2 packages (about 7 ounces each) precooked/instant udon noodles,
cooked as directed on package
- 2 green onions, thinly sliced (optional)

1. Place 1 teaspoon of the peppercorns in large resealable plastic bag. Close tightly. Pound with a rolling pin, mallet or heavy skillet until coarsely cracked. Mix with sea salt. Press seasoning mixture onto both sides of chicken breasts. Grill over medium-high heat 6 to 8 minutes per side or until chicken is cooked through, turning frequently. Keep warm.
2. Place remaining 1 teaspoon peppercorns and lemon grass stalks in the center of a piece of cheesecloth or a coffee filter. Tie tightly with a long piece of string.
3. Heat sesame oil in large saucepan on medium heat. Add bok choy and shitake mushrooms; cook and stir 2 minutes. Add chicken stock, sake, ginger and the spice bundle; bring to boil. Reduce heat to low; simmer 5 minutes. Add snow peas and bell peppers; simmer 5 minutes longer or until tender-crisp. Remove spice bundle.
4. Slice chicken diagonally into thin slices. Divide noodles, broth mixture and chicken evenly among soup bowls. Sprinkle with green onions, if desired.

Makes 6 servings.

Test Kitchen Tips:

- Udon noodles are Japanese noodles made from wheat. They can be found in the Asian aisle of some supermarkets and in Asian groceries. They are available in the precooked/instant form in aseptic packages or in the dried form.
- To use dried udon noodles, cooked noodles in large pot of boiling water 8 to 10 minutes or until tender. Rinse under cold water; drain well. Prepare recipe as directed, adding drained noodles with snow peas and red peppers.
- Sake is available wherever fine wines are sold. It may also be found in the Asian aisle of some supermarkets or in Asian groceries.

Nutritional Information Per Serving: 263 Calories, Fat 5g, Protein 29g, Carbohydrates 22g, Cholesterol 60mg, Sodium 744mg, Fiber 1g

Sake Green Tea Martini with Crushed Peppercorns

Sake, the traditional Japanese rice wine, meets the classic American martini in this trendy cocktail. Peppercorn Mélange provides an eye-catching garnish.

Prep Time: 5 minutes

McCormick® Gourmet Collection™ Peppercorn Mélange

1 1/2 ounces dry sake

1 1/2 ounces vodka

1/2 ounce green tea liqueur

1 small cucumber (optional)

1. Place peppercorns in large resealable plastic bag. Close tightly. Pound with a rolling pin, mallet or heavy skillet until coarsely cracked. Pour out onto a small plate. Wet outside rims of martini glasses with water. Dip glasses in cracked peppercorns to lightly coat.
2. Fill cocktail shaker two-thirds full with ice. Add sake, vodka and green tea liqueur; shake until well mixed and chilled. Strain into martini glasses.
3. If desired, scoop out small cucumber balls from peeled cucumber using a melon baller. Slice thin strips of cucumber peel and float in the martinis.

Makes 2 servings.