

떡국 Tteokguk (New Year's Day rice cake soup)



Ingredients:

600g piece chuck steak or gravy beef
8 - 9 cups of water
300g - 400g sliced tteok (rice cakes)
3 - 4 cloves of garlic
½ tsp minced garlic
1 green onion, whole
2 green onions, thinly sliced
3 ¼ tbsp soy sauce
1 thin white egg omelette, thinly julienned
1 yolk egg omelette, thinly julienned
1/2 tsp sesame oil
Salt and pepper
1 sheet toasted *gim* (dried seaweed sheet), crumbled

Method:

1. Place meat in a pot with water. Bring to a boil then skim off impurities that float to the top. Reduce heat and add garlic and 1 whole green onion. Simmer the stock for about 1 ½ hours or until the meat pulls apart easily.
2. Take out the meat and discard the garlic and green onions. Thinly slice or shred ¼ meat into a bowl. Reserve the rest of the meat for another dish.
3. Add ½ tsp minced garlic, sliced green onions, sesame oil, 1/4 tbsp soy sauce to sliced meat and season with salt and pepper. Mix well and set aside.
4. Bring the stock to a boil again and add the rice cakes and 3 tbsp soy sauce. Simmer for 5 minutes or until the rice cakes are really soft. Season with salt and pepper.
5. Ladle rice cake soup into individual bowls and top with seasoned meat, eggs, sliced green onions and shredded *gim*(dried seaweed). Sprinkle extra pepper before serving.

N.B. Best use *guk ganjang* (soy sauce for soup) rather than regular light soy sauce for deeper flavor. Available in all Korean supermarkets.

Other types of Tteokguk:

- Vegetarian/vegan option: use vegetable stock using onions, garlic, green onions and radish.
- Seafood option: Use stock made with 12 large dried anchovies. Add in seafood towards the end of cooking. Oysters is a popular choice of seafood.
- Popular option is adding Korean *mandu* (dumplings) with rice cakes for *tteok mandu guk* (rice cakes and dumplings soup).
- Different types of *tteok* (rice cakes) can be used, e.g., *garae tteok* (long bar-shaped rice cake), *joraengi tteok* (smaller drop rice cakes).

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