

TEA SMOKED WATERMELON BAO WITH PICKLED WATERMELON RIND SLAW

Yield: 4 Portions

Ingredients	Amounts
Mini watermelon, red	1 ea.
Soy sauce	¼ cup
Chinese 5 spice powder	1 tsp.
Black tea leaves	¼ cup
Jasmine rice	¼ cup
Brown sugar	¼ cup
Star anise, whole	4 ea.
Mayonnaise	½ cup
Sriracha sauce	1 Tbsp.
<i>Watermelon Rind Slaw</i>	
Watermelon rind, julienne	1 cup
Carrots, julienne	½ cup
Daikon radish, julienne	½ cup
Salt	1 tsp.
Bao buns	12 ea.
Hoisin sauce	½ cup
Cilantro leaves	¼ cup

Method

1. Peel the skin off the watermelon with a vegetable peeler. Remove the rind and cut into julienne using a mandoline. Set aside 1 cup for the slaw.
2. Cut the watermelon flesh into 2x4x2 inch slabs and place the slabs in a cryovac bag. Set the trimmings aside for another use.
3. Add soy sauce and 5 spice powder to the cryovac bag to season the slabs.
4. Compress the watermelon in a vacuum sealer at 99%.
5. Line the inside of a wok or a pan smoker with aluminum foil.
6. Mix together the tea leaves, rice, sugar, and star anise. Spread tea mixture evenly on the foil.
7. Place the pan on the burner, uncovered, and turn flame to high heat. When the tea mixture begins to smoke and the rice begins to brown, set the compressed watermelon on the rack. Cover the pan, reduce the heat, and smoke for 8-10 minutes.
8. Turn off the heat and let stand for 5 minutes, until the watermelon turns slightly brown.
9. Remove the lid and slightly cool the watermelon. Slice into ½ inch pieces.
10. Mix together the mayonnaise and the sriracha sauce.
11. *For the Watermelon Rind Slaw:* In another bowl, combine the slaw ingredients. Toss the spicy mayonnaise mixture with the slaw.
12. When ready to assemble the dish, steam the bao according to packaging directions.

13. Assemble the Bao buns by spreading $\frac{1}{2}$ tablespoon hoisin sauce on the inside of each bun, then placing 1 slice of the smoked watermelon and about $\frac{1}{4}$ cup of slaw inside each bun. Garnish with cilantro.