

Sesame Chicken with Cashews and Dates

(NYT)

Serves 4-6

- 4 T sesame oil
- 30-cm piece fresh ginger, peeled and cut into about 12 round slices
- 6 to 8 garlic cloves, peeled and smashed
- 1 bunch scallions (white and green parts), cut into 5-cm lengths
- 3 to 4 dried red chiles, or ½ tsp chili flakes
- 900 g boneless, skinless chicken thighs, cut into 5-cm chunks
- 63 g toasted cashews
- 80 ml sake or dry sherry
- 3 T shoyu
- 4 pitted dates, thinly sliced
- 3 C fresh basil or cilantro leaves, or a combination
- Rice vinegar or lime juice, to taste
- Cooked rice, for serving



1. Season the **chicken** with **salt** and **pepper** while you heat a 30-cm skillet or wok over **high heat** until it's very hot, at least 2 minutes.
2. Add **2 T of sesame oil** and swirl the pan; the oil should thin on contact.
3. When the oil is hot, add the **ginger, garlic, scallions** and **chili**. Stir-fry until the garlic is golden at the edges, **2 to 3 minutes**.
4. Add the **2 remaining tablespoon oil, chicken** and **cashews**, and stir fry until it starts to brown, **4 to 5 minutes** (turn down the heat if the cashews are browning too quickly).
5. Add the **sake, shoyu** and **dates**; simmer until the sauce reduces to a syrupy consistency and the chicken cooks through, **5 to 7 minutes**.
6. Stir in the **herbs**, sprinkle with **rice vinegar** or **lime juice**, and serve over rice.