

Chinese Braised Eggplant with Ginger, Scallions & Protein

Serves 2



Ingredients

- Japanese eggplant – 2 medium (≈250 g), cut into 5 cm batons
- Canola oil – 10 ml (2 tsp)
- Ginger – 1 tsp (5 g), finely chopped
- Scallions – 2 (20 g), cut into 4 cm lengths
- Shaoxing wine (or sake) – 15 ml (1 Tbsp)
- Kevala coconut aminos or low sodium soy sauce – 10 ml (2 tsp)
- Rice vinegar – 2 ml (½ tsp)
- Chili flakes – pinch (optional)
- Salt + MSG blend – 0.8 g salt + 0.2 g MSG (≈⅓ tsp total)

Protein Options (choose one)

- Chicken thigh (boneless, skinless) – 150 g, (2 cm)
- Pork komagire (豚こま切れ肉) – 120 g thin slices
- Firm tofu (momen) – 150 g, cubed and pan-seared until golden
- Shrimp – 130 g, peeled and deveined
- Cashews or peanuts – 25 g, lightly toasted

Optional additions: 1 tsp doubanjiang (豆瓣醬) or chili paste, ½ tsp sesame oil, splash of water (20–30 ml) if sauce thickens.

Instructions

1. Prepare protein:

- Chicken or pork → season lightly with ¼ tsp salt + pinch MSG; stir-fry until 80 % cooked, remove and set aside.
- Tofu → pan-sear until golden on all sides.
- Shrimp → stir-fry 1 min per side until just pink.
- Nuts → toast 1–2 min and reserve.

2. Cook eggplant:

Heat oil in a wok over **medium-high heat**. Add **eggplant**; stir-fry **3–4 min** until slightly softened and edges begin to color.

3. Add aromatics:

Add **ginger**, **scallions**, and (if using) **doubanjiang** or **chili flakes**. Stir **30 seconds** until fragrant.

4. Deglaze & braise:

Add **Shaoxing wine**, **coconut aminos**, **vinegar**, and **salt + MSG blend**. Stir **1 minute**, then cover and **cook 2–3 minutes** until eggplant is tender and glossy. Add a splash of **water** if needed.

5. Finish:

Return protein to pan and toss with sauce until heated through. Drizzle **sesame oil** just before serving.

6. Serve:

Spoon over steamed rice (≈300 g total for 2 servings) and sprinkle toasted **nuts** if used.

Nutrition (per serving, with rice)

- **Base** (eggplant only): Kcal 245 / Protein 6 g / Fat 15 g / Sat Fat 1.5 g / Carbs 20 g / Sugars 6 g / Fiber 4 g / Sodium 480 mg
 - **With Chicken thigh (鶏もも肉)** (150 g):
Kcal 415 / Protein 27 g / Fat 23 g / Sat Fat 3.5 g / Carbs 20 g / Fiber 4 g / Sodium 540 mg
 - **With Pork komagire (豚こま切れ肉)** (120 g):
Kcal 480 / Protein 25 g / Fat 31 g / Sat Fat 6 g / Carbs 20 g / Fiber 4 g / Sodium 560 mg
 - **With Tofu (木綿豆腐)** (150 g):
Kcal 335 / Protein 19 g / Fat 18 g / Sat Fat 2 g / Carbs 21 g / Fiber 5 g / Sodium 500 mg
 - **With Shrimp (むきエビ)** (130 g):
Kcal 360 / Protein 28 g / Fat 16 g / Sat Fat 1.5 g / Carbs 21 g / Fiber 4 g / Sodium 520 mg
 - **With Cashews or peanuts** (25 g):
Kcal 405 / Protein 13 g / Fat 26 g / Sat Fat 4 g / Carbs 22 g / Fiber 5 g / Sodium 510 mg
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Notes

- Soak eggplant batons in lightly salted water 10 min, drain, and pat dry before cooking for better texture.
- Doubanjiang (豆瓣醬) adds subtle heat and deep umami — use ½ tsp for mild spice.
- Add a dash of fish sauce or a few rehydrated shiitake slices for natural umami depth.
- For a seasonal twist, add kabocha cubes (80 g) or shimeji mushrooms (50 g).
- Use Japanese medium-grain rice for serving; drizzle a few drops of sesame oil or chili crisp before eating.