

## **Lion's Head Meatballs**

### **Strengthens Qi and Blood, Brings Good Fortune and Protection**

This is one of my favorite dishes of all time. It's typically eaten during holidays and celebrations because in Chinese culture, Lions represent wisdom, strength, protection against evil spirits, and is widely loved by everyone young and old. Traditionally this dish is made with ground pork because of its high fat content, but this version is made with high quality, organic ground chicken. I was delighted to find that it is just as tasty and tender as the pork version.

The main flavor profile is from Five Spice Powder which includes cinnamon, anise, cloves, Sichuan pepper and fennel – these spices represent all five flavors (sweet, spicy, sour, salty and bitter) according to 5 Element Theory and is prized for its perfect balance of flavors and medicinal properties. This dish's delicious flavor also comes from scallions and ginger which protects against wind Evil (colds & flus) and promotes digestion. You can serve it over fresh, hot rice or noodles – it's guaranteed to be a crowd pleaser at your next celebration!

Pro Tip: You can double the recipe for party size or plenty of easy leftovers.

Serving size: about 6 servings

Preparation time: 12 mins

Cooking time: 30 mins



**Meatball Ingredients:**

- 1 lb organic ground chicken (no lean ground chicken, it's too dry)
- ½ tsp ginger powder or 1" of ginger peeled and minced
- 2 stalks of scallion, thinly sliced
- 1 egg
- 3 Tbsp breadcrumbs
- 1 ½ Tbsp Shaoxing rice wine
- 1 Tbsp tamari or soy sauce
- 1 Tbsp oyster sauce
- ½ Tsp ground white pepper (or ground black pepper)
- ½ Tsp Five spice powder
- 2 Tsp corn starch
- ½ Can of water chestnuts, drained, rinsed and minced (they usually come in 8 oz can)

**Sauce Ingredients:**

- 1 Tbsp cooking oil (you can use leftover oil from frying meatballs)
- 2 stalks of scallion, cut into 2" pieces, white and green parts separated
- ½ tsp of ginger powder or 3 slices of ginger
- 3 Tsp of rock sugar (palm or brown sugar works too)
- 1 Tbsp Shaoxing rice wine
- 2 Tbsp tamari or soy sauce
- 1 Tbsp oyster sauce
- 1 Cup water
- 2 Tsp corn starch dissolved in 1/3 cup hot water
- 6-8 Stalks of baby bok choy, rinsed and leaves separated

### Making the Meatballs

1. Preheat oven to 400 degrees
2. Put ground chicken into mixing bowl
3. Add ginger, scallion, egg, breadcrumbs, rice wine, tamari, oyster sauce, white pepper, Five spice, corn starch and using a spatula, slowly stir for 5 minutes – stir in the same direction, this will make the mixture very tender
4. Add water chestnuts and slowly stir for 2 minutes, in the same direction
5. Optional: Line baking sheet with parchment paper to make clean up easier
6. Using an ice cream scooper or spoon, form balls and place onto baking sheet
7. Bake for 20 minutes
8. When browned, remove from oven

### Making the Sauce

1. As meatballs are baking, heat 1 Tbsp of cooking oil in large wok or soup pot
2. Add in the white and light green portions of scallion and ginger, stir and let cook 1 minute
3. Add sugar, rice wine, tamari, oyster sauce, 1 cup water and stir
4. Increase heat to medium-high and bring to a boil
5. Reduce heat to medium, place bok choy leaves in, stir, cover and let cook 5 minutes
6. Put baked meatballs in your pot or wok, stir, cover and let cook another 3 minutes
7. Add dissolved corn starch into sauce and stir until blended (about 1 minute)
8. Serve over fresh, hot rice or your favorite noodles