

# BÚN THỊT NƯỚNG

Bún thịt nướng (grilled meat on noodles), a favorite lunch dish in Sài Gòn, is a great example of Vietnamese cuisine: juicy, sweet, savory and succulent meat with vermicelli, sharp pickles and herbs to create layers of flavors and textures.

## INGREDIENTS (Serves 4)

- 400g pork belly, cut into bite-size pieces
- 1 lemongrass stalk, finely chopped
- 1 thumb's worth of galangal, finely chopped (optional)
- 2 shallots, finely chopped
- 4 garlic cloves, chopped
- 1 tbs honey
- 2 tsp fish sauce
- 2 tbs cooking oil
- 1 tbs tapioca starch
- 1/2 tsp black pepper
- 1 tbs sugar
- 1 tsp shrimp paste

### Dipping sauce

- 4 tbs cider vinegar
- 4 tbs sugar
- 4 tbs fish sauce
- 2 garlic cloves, finely chopped
- 2 bird's eye chilies, finely chopped

### Noodle salad

- 300g thin rice vermicelli
- 8 coriander stalks, torn
- 12 Thai sweet basil leaves, torn
- 12 cockscomb mint leaves (optional)
- 12 shiso leaves (optional)
- 8 lettuce leaves, torn
- 1/2 cucumber, julienned pickle
- Store-bought pickled leeks (optional)
- 4 tbs roasted salted peanuts, crushed
- 10–12 bamboo skewers

## DIRECTIONS

1. Put the pork, lemongrass, galangal, shallots, garlic, honey, fish sauce, oil, tapioca starch, pepper, sugar and shrimp paste in a bowl.
2. Mix well and rub the mixture into the pork pieces.
3. Marinate in the fridge for 20 minutes.
4. Meanwhile, soak the skewers in water to stop them burning in the oven later.
5. Preheat the oven to 180°C (350°F) Gas 4, or preheat the grill.
6. Push about 3 pork pieces onto each soaked skewer.
7. Cook in the preheated oven for about 18 minutes, or under the preheated grill/broiler for 12–15 minutes, or until well browned.

### Dipping sauce

1. Mix all the ingredients in a bowl with 4 tablespoons hot water.

### Noodle salad

2. Put the rice vermicelli, a pinch of salt and a dash of vinegar in a bowl or pan of boiling water, cover and allow to cook for 5–10 minutes or until soft.
3. Drain and rinse with hot water.
4. Mix together the herbs, lettuce and cucumber and divide between 4 bowls.
5. Add the noodles, pickle and pickled leeks, if using, on top.
6. Scatter the peanuts over everything.
7. Serve with the pork skewers and dipping sauce.