

Rice Thread Cakes

Called banh hoi, these flat squares of rice noodle add a more formal touch to any meal with salad rolls, especially those made with roasted meats.

INGREDIENTS:

- 3 tablespoons vegetable oil
- 2 green onions, sliced thinly
- 8 ounces very thin dried rice noodles, such as banh hoi (see Note)
- 2 tablespoons roasted peanuts, finely chopped

INSTRUCTIONS: Heat the oil in a small pan until it shimmers. Quickly stir in the green onions, then remove the pan from the heat and set aside to cool.

Bring a large pot of water to a full boil. Add the noodles and cook until they are al dente, about 3 minutes. Drain in a colander and rinse briefly with cold water to stop the cooking. Drain a few more minutes, tossing occasionally to remove as much water as possible. (Do not leave longer than 5 minutes, or the noodles won't form cakes easily.)

Brush an 11½ x 16½-inch baking

sheet with a thin coat of the reserved green onion oil. Spread the noodles in a thin layer on the sheet. Press firmly with the palms of your hands to flatten the noodles. Let sit at least 20 minutes to set. (The noodles can be refrigerated at this point but should be brought back to room temperature before serving; cover well with plastic film to keep them moist.)

Brush the top of the noodles with more of the oil and sprinkle evenly with the peanuts.

Cut the noodles into 3-inch squares and arrange on a small platter.

Yields 15-18 cakes

Note: Look for the words “vermicelli” or “rice stick” on English-language labels.

PER CAKE: 70 calories, 1 g protein, 11 g carbohydrate, 3 g fat (0 saturated), 0 cholesterol, 2 mg sodium, 0 fiber.