

Bibimbap

Serves 2

This isn't the most traditional way to make the Korean dish bibimbap, but it's my way — tons of vegetables and chile paste to taste.

8 ounces washed spinach, with some water clinging to the leaves

1½ teaspoons toasted sesame oil

Coarse salt

3 tablespoons safflower oil

1 carrot, peeled and cut into matchsticks

1 zucchini, cut into matchsticks

5 medium shiitake mushrooms, stems removed, caps thinly sliced

2 tablespoons rice vinegar

½ teaspoon sugar

½ cup bean sprouts

2 large eggs

2 cups cooked short-grain rice (prepared according to manufacturer's instructions)

⅓ cup chopped kimchi (radish or cabbage)

1 scallion, cut into matchsticks

1 tablespoon black or white sesame seeds

Asian chili paste, preferably Korean (kochujang)

Soy sauce, to taste

Instructions:

Place a large saute pan over medium-high heat. Add spinach, toss once or twice, and cover. Cook until spinach is wilted, about 3 minutes. Drain, then gently squeeze out excess liquid. Place in a small bowl, and toss with sesame oil. Season with salt, then place on a plate. Reserve bowl.

Wipe out the pan. Add ½ tablespoon of the safflower oil, and heat over medium-high. Add carrot and cook, stirring for about 2 minutes. Transfer to a bowl and set aside. Wipe out the pan, add ½

tablespoon of safflower oil and heat over medium-high. Add zucchini and cook, stirring for about 2-3 minutes. Transfer to the bowl with the carrots and set aside. Add 1 tablespoon safflower oil to the pan and place back on heat. Add mushrooms and cook, stirring, 1-2 minutes.

Add carrots and zucchini back to the pan along with the rice vinegar and sugar, and cook for 1 minute more. Transfer to the reserved bowl. Add bean sprouts to pan, and cook, stirring constantly, for 2 minutes. Transfer to the plate with the spinach.

Wipe out pan. Add remaining tablespoon safflower oil, and once hot, crack eggs into pan, and fry until whites are set but yolks remain wobbly.

Divide rice between 2 bowls. Arrange vegetables, kimchi and scallions in a circle on top of the rice, keeping each group separate from the other. Place an egg in the center of each. Sprinkle with sesame seeds.

To eat, fork into the egg, add some chili paste and a drizzle of soy sauce, and mix away — the yolk will create a sauce to coat the rice.

Per serving: 521 calories, 17 g protein, 47 g carbohydrate, 31 g fat (4 g saturated), 212 mg cholesterol, 349 mg sodium, 9 g fiber.



Wine pairing: Spicy hot kimchi and chile paste dominate this dish, though the sweet-sour combo of sugar and rice vinegar tones it down a bit. You will need a slightly off-dry wine, like the 2007 Rosemount South Eastern Australia Traminer Riesling (\$10), which is 70 percent Traminer (better known as Gewurztraminer) and 30 percent Riesling.