

Wok Tossed Chilli Crab

Free recipe from *What Katie Ate* by Katie Quinn Davies, *Wok-Tossed Chilli Crab*, page 189.

Served with a green salad, lots of crusty bread and some chilled sparkling, this dish makes for a great, casual, communal meal with friends.

Some people shy away from cooking crab as they think the preparation is too fiddly and difficult. I would encourage you to give it a go — there are lots of great online tutorials out there that can take you through the process step by step. Please note: mud crab must be cooked live, and the most humane way to go about this is to first place the crabs in the freezer for at least 30 minutes to stun them. The crabs must be completely still before being immersed in the boiling water — if you see any movement at all, return them to the freezer for a short time.



2 large uncooked mud crabs
2 cooked blue swimmer crabs, cleaned, body cut into quarters and legs and claws cracked

Chilli sauce

2 tablespoons olive oil
3 cloves garlic, thinly sliced
1 teaspoon finely grated galangal
1 long green chilli, thinly sliced, plus extra to garnish
1 long red chilli, thinly sliced, plus extra to garnish
5–6 spring onions, trimmed and thinly sliced on the diagonal, plus extra to garnish
1/3 cup (100 g) chilli bean paste
2 tablespoons rice wine vinegar
15 g palm sugar, grated
1 cup (250 ml) fish stock
sea salt and freshly ground black pepper
handful each roughly chopped coriander and flat-leaf parsley

Serves 4

Freeze the mud crabs for 30 minutes or until they are stunned completely, then plunge them into a large saucepan of salted boiling water. Cover and cook for 20 minutes or until cooked through. If your crabs are on the small side, reduce the cooking time to 15 minutes. Drain, then separate the bodies from the claws and legs. Remove the meat from the bodies, and crack the claws and legs, then combine in a bowl with the prepared blue swimmer crabs.

Heat the olive oil in a wok over medium heat, add the garlic, galangal, chilli and spring onion and stir-fry for 5 minutes. Add the chilli bean paste, vinegar, palm sugar and stock and mix well. Add the crab, along with all the loose meat, and heat through for 5–6 minutes, tossing until heated through and well coated in sauce. Season with a little salt and pepper, then turn out into a large serving bowl.

Scatter the coriander, parsley and extra chilli and spring onion over the top and serve immediately.