

Happy Chinese New Year!!!

# Long Noodle Soup "Longevity Noodle Soup"

Former White House Chef Marti Mongiello, MBA, MA, MCFE ©2022 The US Presidential Culinary Museum®



President's H.W. Bush, W. Bush, and Nixon are known as big fans of Peking Duck. But did you know that H.W. visited the Peking Gourmet Inn Restaurant over 50 times to enjoy authentic Chinese food in Falls Church, Virginia!? As the former Ambassador of the United States to China, he never forgot his love of great Chinese food - and ate all of the specialties, including Longevity Noodle Soup. That's why he invited Chef George Tsui to the Bush family home to cook for his and Barbara's 50th wedding anniversary celebration in Houston on January 6, 1995! As the owner of Peking Gourmet Inn, George was a close and trusted friend of the Bush family. Another enjoyable feast was by President Biden, in Beijing, with his granddaughter at the famous Yaoji Chaogan Restaurant where all of the news outlets heralded his lunch in 2011 (then VP) as, "Noodle Diplomacy." Owner Yao Yan sells the "Biden Set Luncheon" to this day and fondly recalls the surprise visit and cheers with clapping by Chinese diners. The Clinton's invited cellist Yo-Yo Ma and Wu Man who played the pipa (an ancient Chinese four-stringed lute) for a state dinner held in honor of Premier Zhu Rongji on April 8, 1999. We used red damask tablecloths with red and white china plates next to gold flatware for a striking display of honor. During WWII, Madame Chiang Kai-shek (a graduate of Wellesley College) stayed at the White House for quite a while and the Roosevelt's shared their famous Fish Chowder Soup. Soups on!





After living in Asia for three years, I can explain this soup to a Westerner as a **beef or chicken bullion soup** with **one long noodle** in it, per bowl and Asian vegetables. It's never going to be as authentic as eating it in China, but we can make a darn good version! Feel free to use your favorite vegetables from Asia like **baby corn, bamboo shoots, water chestnuts**, thinly sliced **Chinese cabbage**, chopped **green onion**, peeled fresh **ginger** cut into coins, peeled **garlic cloves**, exotic Asian **mushrooms** (any kind like Shitake, Enoki, Shimeji, etc.), **Mung Bean Sprouts**, **carrot** matchsticks, and more! **Soy or fish sauce** to taste. Each town claims, "they make it the right way," so feel free to shop for what you enjoy. Add **grilled chicken, steak, tofu**, or **seitan** if you like. I add them to bowl and do not boil my meats.

For the noodles, we mix **water, high-gluten flour**, and **salt** to make a soft playdough. Wrap it in plastic wrap and let it grow for 20-minutes on the counter before using a rolling pin to roll it out flat. Then cut and try to make the longest noodles you can! You'll notice in our shows that we also pull off a piece of dough and roll it gently with our hands to make long noodles. Or just buy some long noodles and boil them separately in a pot with a touch of Sesame Oil in the water, drain, then add to soup last minute.

Make the broth in a large pot using **Miso Paste** (blond for chicken and red for beef soup) and decide if you want to bolster it with a few tablespoons of **bullion** to your taste. Add ground **pepper** to taste, throw in the hard garlic, carrot, and ginger (and any other hard veggies) to simmer for 20-minutes until softened. Chinese prefer this soup to have slightly crisp veggies - not boiled mush. Then add your slivered Chinese Cabbage, baby corn, and other softer veggies to the big soup pot. Ladle broth and veggies into some **large Asian soup bowls** and decorate with grilled steak or chicken, chopped green onions, and even more decorative blanched carrot matchsticks. Be sure to provide **chopsticks**, an **Asian spoon** for each person, and a **chopsticks rest** (see photo above) special experience just like the White House does!

