

Tea-Brined Chicken Nuggets

with a Trio of Sauces

These refined chicken nuggets are brined in oolong tea and coated with a seasoned panko crust, creating a crispy and flavorful appetizer that is sure to impress.

PREP TIME: 20 minutes (plus 1 hour brining time)

1 lb chicken breast, cut into nugget-sized pieces
1 C Fujian Ti Kuan Yin Oolong Tea (Adagio.com), brewed and cooled
1/4 C salt
1/4 C sugar
1 C panko breadcrumbs
1 † Old Bay seasoning

COOK TIME: 15 minutes

TOTAL TIME: 1 hour 35 minutes

1/2 † garlic powder
1/2 † onion powder
1/2 † paprika
1/4 † black pepper
1/4 C all-purpose flour
1 egg, beaten
1/4 C vegetable oil for frying

BRINE CHICKEN: In a large bowl, combine the brewed oolong tea, salt, and sugar. Add the chicken pieces and refrigerate for 1 hour.

PREPARE PANKO CRUST: In a shallow dish, combine the panko breadcrumbs, Old Bay seasoning, garlic powder, onion powder, paprika, and black pepper. Place the flour in another shallow dish and the beaten egg in a third dish.

COAT CHICKEN: Remove the chicken from the brine and pat dry with paper towels. Dredge each piece in flour, dip in the beaten egg, and then coat with the seasoned panko mixture.

FRY CHICKEN: Heat the vegetable oil in a large skillet over medium-high heat. Fry the chicken nuggets in batches until golden brown and cooked through, about 3-4 minutes per side. Drain on paper towels.

SERVE: Arrange the chicken nuggets on a serving platter. Serve immediately with your favorite dipping sauce.

Cucumber Ranch Sauce

This refreshing cucumber ranch sauce is elevated with fresh herbs and a touch of lemon zest for a sophisticated twist on a classic.

1/2 C Greek yogurt
1/4 C mayonnaise
1/4 C cucumber, finely grated and drained
1 T fresh dill, chopped
1 T fresh chives, chopped
1 T fresh parsley, chopped

1 † lemon zest
1 T lemon juice
1/2 † garlic powder
1/2 † onion powder
1/4 † salt
1/4 † black pepper

PREPARE SAUCE: In a medium bowl, combine the Greek yogurt, mayonnaise, grated cucumber, dill, chives, parsley, lemon zest, lemon juice, garlic powder, onion powder, salt, and black pepper. Mix well. Adjust seasoning to taste. Serve immediately or refrigerate until ready to use.

Tangy Tomato-Orange Sauce

This tangy tomato-based sauce has a slight heat and is enhanced with a hint of orange zest and orange juice infused with orange tea for a unique flavor profile.

1 C tomato sauce	1/2 t garlic powder
1/4 C orange juice	1/2 t onion powder
1 T Orange Tea (Adagio.com)	1/4 t cayenne pepper (optional, for slight heat, adjust to taste)
1 t orange zest	1/4 t salt
1 T apple cider vinegar	1/4 t black pepper
1 T honey	
1/2 t smoked paprika	

INFUSE ORANGE JUICE: In a small pot, bring the orange juice to a simmer. Add the Orange Tea and let it steep for 5 minutes. Strain the tea leaves using a cheesecloth-lined colander. Set the infused orange juice aside.

PREPARE SAUCE: In a medium saucepan, combine the tomato sauce, infused orange juice, orange zest, apple cider vinegar, honey, smoked paprika, garlic powder, onion powder, cayenne pepper (if using), salt, and black pepper. Bring to a simmer and cook for 10 minutes, stirring occasionally. Adjust seasoning to taste. Serve immediately or refrigerate until ready to use.

Spicy Habanero-Serrano Sauce

This fiery sauce combines the heat of habanero and serrano peppers with a blend of other ingredients for a balanced and flavorful kick.

1/2 habanero pepper, seeds removed and finely chopped	1 t honey
2 serrano peppers, seeds removed and finely chopped	1/2 t garlic powder
1/4 C mayonnaise	1/2 t onion powder
1/4 C Greek yogurt	1/4 t salt
1 T lime juice	1/4 t black pepper
	1 T fresh cilantro, chopped
	2 T Mexican crema fresca

PREPARE SAUCE: In a blender or food processor, combine the habanero pepper, serrano peppers, mayonnaise, Greek yogurt, lime juice, honey, garlic powder, onion powder, salt, black pepper, cilantro, and Mexican crema fresca. Blend until smooth. Adjust seasoning to taste. Serve immediately or refrigerate until ready to use.