



Chef Flora's Fabulous Banana Boba

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Prep Time 20 / **Cook Time** 5 / **Serves** 4 - 6

Fun-Da-Mentals Kitchen Skills

boil: to cook a food in liquid heated to the point of gas bubbles and steam forming (boiling point is 212 F at sea level).

roll: to use a rolling pin to flatten dough; use your hands to form a roll or ball shape; or move a round food, like a grape or a meatball, through another food, like sugar or breadcrumbs, to coat it.

simmer: to cook a food gently, usually in a liquid, until softened.

shape: to form food into a specific shape by hand or with a cutting tool—examples are cutting cookie dough into shapes with cookie cutters, forming bread dough into a roll or crescent shape, and rolling ground meat into a meatball.

smash: to break up food into smaller pieces or squash food to flatten or soften it.

Equipment

- Large pot
- Large bowl
- Small bowl
- Masher or fork
- Can opener
- Measuring cups
- Measuring spoons
- Cutting board
- Kid-safe knife

Ingredients

Chef Flora's Fabulous Banana Boba

- 2 C water, divided
- 2 C tapioca starch (flour) + more if banana is super ripe
- 1/3 C + 2 T granulated sugar, brown sugar, or honey, divided
- 3/4 tsp pure vanilla extract, divided ******(for CELIAC/GLUTEN ALLERGY use certified gluten-free pure vanilla extract, not imitation vanilla flavor—check label)******
- 1 banana
- 2 13-oz cans coconut milk
- 1/4 C shredded coconut, optional
- 2 C ice, optional

Food Allergen Substitutions

Chef Flora's Fabulous Banana Boba

Celiac/Gluten/Wheat: Use certified gluten-free pure vanilla extract, not imitation vanilla flavor.

Instructions

Chef Flora's Fabulous Banana Boba

intro

"Xin chào" (Sin chow) or "Hello" in Vietnamese! Today we will be making boba! This popular tapioca treat is made by combining sugar and your favorite flavor with tapioca starch. Once a dough is formed, you cut, shape, and boil the boba until they have the squishy and chewy texture that the world has come to love! This particular boba is based on a Vietnamese sweet pudding called "chè chuối," made with ripe bananas, coconut milk, and tapioca pearls (boba).

measure + boil

Measure **1 cup of water** and pour it into a large pot. Bring it to a boil.

measure + mix

In a large bowl, measure **2 cups tapioca starch**, **1/3 cup sugar or honey**, and **1/2 teaspoon vanilla extract**. Carefully pour the boiling water into the bowl. Stir until a ball of gelatinous dough forms.

smash + mix

In a small bowl, smash **1 banana** until smooth. Mix the banana into the ball of tapioca dough with clean hands. You may need to sprinkle an extra tablespoon of tapioca starch on your hands to keep it from sticking to you. Practice counting in Vietnamese while you mash the banana: 1 một (moh), 2 hai (hye), 3 ba (baah).

measure + simmer

Open **2 cans of coconut milk** and pour them into the large pot. Then, measure and add **1 cup water**, **2 tablespoons sugar or honey**, and **1/4 teaspoon vanilla extract**. Bring the mixture to a gentle simmer.

roll + cut + shape

While the drink simmers, roll the banana boba dough into a long log. Then cut the log into as many pea sized pillows as possible. Shape each one into your favorite shapes or you can cook the boba as is.

simmer + stir

Add the shaped banana boba into the simmering coconut drink. They will change from white to clear as they cook. Once the boba has cooked for 2 minutes, turn the heat off.

pour + slurp

Ladle scoops of the drink into cups. You can serve it warm or cold. If you want to serve it cold, simply allow the drink to cool in a bowl, then add **2 cups of ice** to finish cooling it down. Before you slurp your drink up, you can sprinkle a bit of **shredded coconut** into your cup. "Một, Hai, Ba, Dzô!" (Moh, Hye, Baah, Yo) or "1,2,3, Cheers" in Vietnamese!

Featured Ingredient: Banana!

Hi! I'm Banana!

"I'm such an 'a-peeling' fruit, I'm just going to have to tell you a little about myself! Bananas are very popular. We're long and curved, and we typically have a yellow outer layer (like some raincoats!) called a peel or skin. After peeling a banana, you can eat it whole; slice it into cereal, salads, or desserts; and mash it and put us on toast or add us to pancake or banana bread batter. Be careful not to throw your banana peel on the floor, or someone might slip on it!"

History

The Latin scientific name for banana is "musa sapientum," or "fruit of the wise men."

The first recorded mention of bananas is from the 6th century BCE. They were represented in Egyptian hieroglyphs.

Bananas may have been Earth's first fruit and the first fruit cultivated by people. The first banana farms were in southeast Asia.

The phrase "going bananas" came about because monkeys love bananas!

India produces over 26 percent of the world's bananas. In the United States, Hawaii grows the most bananas.

There are a few cultures, especially Japan's, where the fiber from the banana plant is used to make fabric and sometimes even paper.

The world's record for the longest banana split is 4.97 miles. In March 2017, Innisfail, Australia, residents made it using 40,000 bananas, 660 gallons of ice cream, and 528 gallons of topping. It took hundreds of volunteers 12 hours to prepare the banana split.

People like their bananas! Worldwide we eat more than 100 billion bananas each year! Of those, Americans annually eat about 27 pounds of bananas per person. But we don't eat as many bananas as the Ugandan people. Their average consumption each year is 500 pounds per person!

Anatomy & Etymology

What appears to be a banana tree is actually an herbaceous flowering plant (the world's largest).

A banana plant can grow an inch or more while you sleep at night, eventually growing from 10 to 25 feet high.

Botanically, a banana is a berry.

Since commercially-grown bananas do not contain seeds, you cannot grow a banana from seed unless you can find someone who sells seeds from the wild fruit. Otherwise, new plants are grown from offshoots or suckers of the banana plant.

A single banana fruit is called a finger, and a cluster of fruit is called a hand. There are 10 to 20 fingers on each hand.

About 75 percent of a banana's weight is water.

Because bananas are less dense than water, they are able to float.

Wild banana varieties include bubblegum pink bananas with fuzzy skins, green-and-white striped bananas with orange sherbet-colored flesh, and bananas that taste like strawberries when cooked.

The word "banana" may have come from the West African Wolof word "banaana," through late 16th century Portuguese or Spanish. However, it could have come from the Arab word "banan," meaning finger.

How to Pick, Buy, & Eat

Bananas ripen best if growers pick them when they are still green.

Don't separate a banana from the bunch if you want it to ripen more quickly.

Putting bananas in a sealed container, like a brown paper bag, will hasten them to ripen, especially if you add another type of fruit to the bag.

You may have noticed that organic bananas often come with plastic wrap around the top stems of a bunch, but you can also wrap yours at home. Tightly wrapped stems will help bananas last three to five days longer.

Try peeling a banana from the bottom up toward the stem to avoid dislodging the stringy vascular tissue running down the length of the fruit inside. Those strings are called "phloem" (pronounced "flom").

Banana peels are actually edible if cooked.

Once you peel a banana and it comes in contact with air, it can begin to turn brown. Sprinkling lemon or pineapple juice on a cut banana will prevent this.

Don't be surprised that the banana peel turns brown or black after being refrigerated—it won't affect the fruit inside. This darkening happens because the cold breaks down the skin's cell walls and causes compounds in it to oxidize.

You can put ripe or overripe bananas in the freezer and then add a frozen banana to your blender when making a smoothie instead of ice. You can also insert a popsicle stick into one end of a banana, freeze the banana, then dip the frozen banana in chocolate melted with a little oil. If desired, roll the coated banana in toppings like nuts, coconut flakes, or sprinkles, then refreeze for a chocolaty, nutritious frozen dessert.

Nutrition

Bananas contain vitamin C, potassium, fiber, and vitamin B6.

Bananas have 31 percent of the daily value of vitamin B6! This vitamin strengthens your nervous and immune systems. It also is needed for your body to make serotonin, a hormone that elevates mood.

About half of all people allergic to latex may also be allergic to bananas.