


Chef Secrets: How To Make The Perfect Chicken Lettuce Wrap At Home



Brad Japhe Contributor 
Spirits



Chicken San Choy Bow KOKOMO PRIVATE ISLAND FIJI

San Choy Bow (Bau) is a Chinese-inspired chicken lettuce wrap that has become increasingly popular on modern dinner menus—from Sydney to Boston. **Caroline Oakley** has perfected her own plating in paradise. As head chef at **Kokomo Private Island** in Fiji, she can be seen working hard beside the cerulean surf, wok in hand, beaming smile on her face.

While you might not get to enjoy her cooking at this exact moment, Oakley has made it exceedingly simple to re-create her magic in your home kitchen with a 5-minute demo video she recently posted to resort's [Instagram account](#). Her self-described philosophy involves “cooking with heart and soul.” What that usually equates to are full-flavored stir-fries and curries that sing. They work well *because* of simple preparation, not *despite* it.

And thanks to [Fiji Airways new A-350XWB jumbo jet service](#), getting to the islands will soon be a whole lot simpler as well. In the meantime enjoy this exclusive interview with the chef, followed by her step-by-step recipe for San Choy Bow.

How are you holding up during these turbulent times?

Well apart from the current global pandemic, the South Pacific recently experienced a tropical cyclone. In these turbulent times, I have found that focusing on the present and taking it one day at a time is vital—this include getting enough sleep, focusing on one task at a time before thinking of the next task at hand, and bringing attention inside to nourish your inner self. Meditate on the present and not the future.

What are some basic tips we can use to find nourishment when we're holed up at home?

While we're holed up at home, it's a great time to stimulate your mind and make cooking a fun activity by whipping up your own little inventions. This means diversifying classic dishes by taking one basic dish you love and changing it to make something new! For example, turning your left over bolognese into a Shepherd's pie— add frozen peas, carrots and corn, make mashed potatoes and pop it into a casserole dish, and it becomes an Italian inspired Shepherd's Pie. Other left over ingredients can be turned into Buddha Bowls which are also super healthy! Never waste food.

What are some things that you're doing to pass the time/preserve your well-being?

I am passing the time by compiling a file of recipes I hope to one day publish for my very own little cookbook. Other ways I am preserving my well-being include: cleaning (a huge comfort for me), organizing and sorting out my wardrobe, putting aside clothes I no longer wear, opening my windows at least 2 hours a day to exchange fresh air, and going for long walks for circulation and peace of mind.

Why do you feel as though the San Choy Bow is a particularly comforting dish for home preparation?

The Chicken San Choy Bow dish is easy to make at home, with 5 simple steps and perfect to enjoy with friends and family. You can easily substitute the chicken with prawns, beef or even veggies (to make it vegetarian friendly).

What are some key ingredients that are vital to have stocked in your kitchen while you're stuck at home?

***Timed staples** such as beans, corn, tomato, and chickpeas. Additionally, **dried foods** such as lentils, quinoa, rice, oats, flour, and pasta, and basic **herbs and spices**, keeping in mind whole herbs are best because when you grind them fresh they have a stronger more vibrant flavor. **Fresh Fruit** like apples and oranges keep fresh longer and can't forget frozen peas, berries, broccoli, cauliflower and carrots, meats, poultry and seafood and cheese, milk, frozen bread, crackers.*

Any good shows, albums, or books that you can recommend for quarantine consumption?

***Avatar: The Last Airbender** for philosophy, **Mr. Robot** for that 'woke' feeling and **The Lego Movie** because it is mindless fun and harkens back to the Saturday morning cartoons with the message of 'EVERYONE IS SPECIAL!'*



Chef Caroline Oakley of Kokomo Private Island Fiji SHARIS ROSTAMIAN

INGREDIENTS

- 60ml Vegetable Oil
- 200g Skinless Chicken Thigh (Diced)
- 15ml Fish Sauce
- 60ml Palm Sugar Syrup
- 30ml Lime Juice
- 1/2 Shallot, thinly sliced
- 1 Clove Garlic Thinly Sliced
- 1 Tsp Toasted Broken Rice
- 1 Tsp Dried Chili Flakes
- 10g Picked Corriander
- 10g Picked Mint
- 10g Chopped Spring Onion
- 8 Leaves of Baby Cos Lettuce or Iceberg Lettuce Cups

DIRECTIONS

- 1. Heat Wok to high heat, add vegetable oil and give it a swirl to coat the wok well with oil.
- 2. Add Diced chicken to the wok, continuously stir till chicken is cooked and all the juices dry up
- 3. Add palm sugar syrup, fish sauce and lime juice, continuously stir till the liquid thickens and caramelizes and sticks to the chicken giving a golden brown color.
- 4. Pour chicken into a mixing bowl; add shallots, garlic, toasted rice, dried chili flakes, mixed herbs and mix it through.
- 5. Dish into a serving bowl, serve with lettuce placed on the side or fill the Lettuce Cups in with the mix!



Lunch time in paradise KOKOMO ISLAND FIJI

Link: <https://www.forbes.com/ChickenLettuceWrap>