

Courtesy of Lucky Star

MAINS Lucky Star

Lucky Star's three-cup chicken

By Sarra Sedghi · Rough Draft Atlanta, 11/5/2025

Serves 2 to 3 people

Ingredients

- [ ] 1 lb (450 g) boneless chicken thighs, cut into 1 1/2-inch pieces
- [ ] 1 Tbsp sesame oil
- [ ] 12 thin slices fresh ginger (about 20 g)
- [ ] 6 cloves garlic, lightly smashed
- [ ] 1 to 2 small red chiles, sliced (optional)
- [ ] 1/4 cup water (plus a splash more, if needed)
- [ ] 1 packed cup Thai basil leaves, plus a few small sprigs to garnish
- [ ] Steamed white rice, to serve
- [ ] 1/4 cup soy sauce
- [ ] 1/4 cup Taiwanese michiu (or Shaoxing wine)
- [ ] 2 Tbsp light brown sugar

Directions

1. **Prep the sauce:** Whisk together soy sauce, michiu, light brown sugar, white pepper, and cinnamon, if desired.
2. **Prep the aromatics:** Heat oil over medium-high. Add ginger slices and garlic; sauté until fragrant and just lightly golden.
3. Add the chicken. Brown on both sides.
4. Add mixed sauce, 1/4 cup water, and sliced chiles, if using. Cook 2 to 3 minutes at a lively simmer until glossy and reduced. Add a splash of water if the sauce reduces too quickly, or for a looser sauce. For a thicker glaze, simmer an additional 30 to 60 seconds.
5. Remove from heat. Fold in Thai basil until just wilted.
6. Garnish with fresh basil leaves and serve with steamed rice.

- [ ] Pinch white pepper
- [ ] Tiny pinch ground cinnamon (optional)

The story

This week, we're sharing Lucky Star's three-cup chicken recipe. Also known as san bei ji, three-cup chicken is a traditional Taiwanese dish made with rice wine, sesame oil, Thai basil, garlic, ginger, and sometimes, dried chiles.

At 11 a.m. at Michelin-recommended Lucky Star on Howell Mill Road, the menu shifts to heartier Taiwanese fare, including Chef Jason Liang's beef noodle soup, a duck fat scallion pancake, snacks of soft-boiled tea eggs, and three-cup chicken.

This three-cup chicken recipe requires Thai basil, which has a higher spice degree and deeper anise flavor. You can find Thai basil at an international grocery store or market. Simply look for purple stems and even a few purple leaves, the herb's telltale visual characteristic. If you can't find Thai basil, sweet basil or standard basil will work, but know that it won't yield the exact same flavor.

The recipe also calls for michiu, a Taiwanese rice wine used for cooking. Check markets such as Jusgo in Duluth for michiu. However, you can replace michiu with Shaoxing wine, another rice-based cooking wine.

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