



FOOD, FUN, 4-H TAKES FLIGHT

DESTINATION: VIETNAM



Your kitchen is about to become your runway! You don't need a boarding pass or packed bags — just a sense of adventure and a readiness to explore new flavors. In Food, Fun, 4-H Takes Flight, we're traveling the world one meal at a time, and this stop brings us to the fresh and flavorful country of Vietnam!

Vietnamese food is all about balance and brightness. Meals often combine crunchy, soft, sweet, tangy and savory flavors in one dish, making every bite exciting! Fresh herbs, colorful vegetables, rice and noodles are key ingredients, and many dishes are light, healthy and full of flavor. From street food favorites to meals shared around the family table, food in Vietnam is a way to connect, celebrate and enjoy time together.

On this stop of your Food, Fun, 4-H journey, your family will cook, learn and have fun together while exploring Vietnamese culture.

This is your chance to try something new, build kitchen confidence and create meaningful moments as a family. So, tie on your apron, invite your family to join in and get ready for a flavorful adventure, Vietnam is calling!

WHAT'S INCLUDED

Discover and Learn: Explore interesting facts about Vietnam, how food connects to culture and simple nutrition tips to keep your body fueled.

Cook Together: Follow easy, step-by-step recipes to create a full Vietnamese-inspired meal.

Move and Connect: Try a fun family activity and spark great conversation around the table.



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LEARN ABOUT VIETNAM

Location: Vietnam is a country occupying the eastern portion of the mainland of southeast Asia. Vietnam is bordered by China to the north, the South China Sea, the Gulf of Thailand to the southwest and Cambodia and Laos to the west. Vietnam is approximately 1,025 miles north to south and 30 miles wide.

Distance from Oklahoma City: If you traveled from Oklahoma City (Oklahoma's State Capitol) to Hanoi (Vietnam's Capitol), you would fly 8,260 miles and travel over parts of Europe. There are no direct flights to Hanoi from Oklahoma City because refueling the plane would be required. Flying to Hanoi is easier from a larger airport like Los Angeles, Atlanta or Newark.

Major Landmark: Halong Bay is a very famous landmark in Vietnam. Halong Bay sits in the Gulf of Tonkin and is one of the new seven wonders of the world. It is famous for its emerald green water and has more than 1,133 islands and limestone formations. The bay is protected and is one of Vietnam's national parks.

Holiday Celebration: National Day is celebrated in Vietnam every year on Sept. 2. This day marks the reading of the Vietnamese Declaration of Independence in 1945 from France. There is lots of country pride around National Day and there are special events across Vietnam like boat races, parades and fireworks.

Languages Spoken: Vietnamese is the primary language of Vietnam, but there are more than 110 languages and dialects spoken across the country. English is taught to students and used in tourism, business and many major cities and French is spoken primarily by the older generations who were under the French reign.



Flag of Vietnam



Halong Bay



National Day celebration



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SHOPPING LIST

PANTRY

- Salt and pepper
- Cooking oil
- ¼-½ cup small white tapioca pearls (use ¼ cup for less tapioca or ½ cup for more tapioca)
- 2 ¼ teaspoons five-spice powder
- ⅔ cup rice vinegar (or apple cider vinegar)
- ¼ cup plus 1 tablespoon honey (to taste)
- ½ cup fish sauce (can substitute soy sauce)
- 1 tablespoon oyster sauce (can substitute hoisin sauce)
- 5 tablespoons maple syrup
- 1 – 13.5 oz can coconut milk
- 1 ½ tbsp fish sauce (substitute light or all-purpose soy sauce)
- 7 ounces dried thin vermicelli rice noodles (substitute with any thin noodle)
- Peanuts (optional)
- ¼ cup sugar

PRODUCE

- 3 tablespoons minced shallots
- 4 tablespoons minced garlic
- 4 small tomatoes, sliced into thin wedges (about 10-12 oz)
- 7 Vietnamese bananas or regular bananas
- 1 tbsp lemongrass, finely grated (or mixture of 1 tablespoon lemon zest combined with 1 teaspoon of grated fresh ginger)
- 1 tablespoon lime juice
- 3 cups cucumber, julienned
- 3 cups carrots, julienned
- 2 ⅓ cups fresh herbs — basil, cilantro, mint, scallions (your choice)
- 2 jalapeno peppers (optional)
- 1 lime
- 1 small Thai chili pepper - (optional)

BAKING

- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
- 2 tablespoons brown sugar

MEAT

- 2.5 lbs meaty pork ribs
- 12 ounces boneless chicken thighs



SWEET AND SOUR PORK RIBS

Nutrition per serving:

Calories: 893 kcal | Total Fat: 67g | Sodium: 1,711mg | Carbohydrates: 25g | Protein: 46g

INGREDIENTS

- Cooking oil
- 2.5 lbs meaty pork ribs, cut into 2-inch long sections
- ½ teaspoon salt
- 3 tablespoons minced shallots
- 2 tablespoons minced garlic
- 4 small tomatoes, sliced into thin wedges (about 10-12 ounces)
- 2 ¼ teaspoons five-spice powder
- ½ cup rice vinegar (or apple cider vinegar)
- ¼ cup plus 1 tablespoon honey (to taste)
- ½ - ⅔ cup water
- 3 tablespoons fish sauce (can substitute soy sauce)
- 1 tablespoon oyster sauce (can substitute hoisin sauce)
- Black pepper

PREP TIME

10 MIN

COOK TIME

50 MIN

SERVINGS

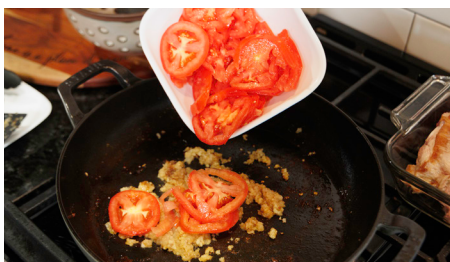
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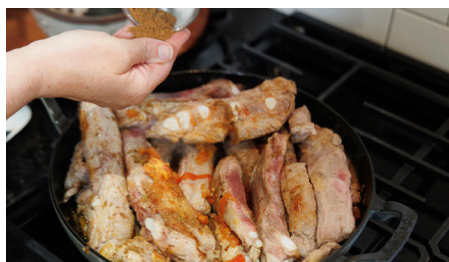
DIRECTIONS



1. If choosing to finish cooking in the oven, preheat your oven to 375°F (190°C). If you prefer to use the stove top from start to finish, no need to preheat the oven. Gather and prep all ingredients.
2. Place an ovenproof sauté pan over medium/medium-high heat. Once pan is hot, add cooking oil to coat the bottom. Toss ribs with salt and add them in single layer and sear until lightly browned. You may need to work in batches.



3. With the seared ribs set aside, lower the heat to medium and then add shallot, garlic and sauté briefly until fragrant. Add tomatoes and sauté for 1-2 minutes.



4. Add seared ribs to the pan and give everything a stir. Sprinkle five-spice powder and toss with the ribs.



5. Add vinegar, honey, water, fish sauce, oyster sauce and some black pepper. Increase heat to medium-high, stir to combine everything and bring to a boil. Adjust the amount of water so that the liquid should be almost enough to cover the ribs.



6. If using the oven, put the pan in the oven and cook for 30-40 minutes, or until ribs are tender and coated with the thickened sauce.



7. Give it a stir every 15 minutes, and before finishing cooking 5-10 minutes, taste the ribs and the sauce and adjust seasonings to your liking.



8. Instead of putting the pan in the oven, you can simmer it on the stovetop until ribs are tender and coated with the thickened sauce. Give it a stir every 15 minutes, and before finishing cooking 5-10 minutes, taste the ribs and the sauce and adjust seasonings to your liking.



Learn more at 4h.okstate.edu



Grab the family, take a photo of your dish and share your culinary masterpiece on social media with **#FoodFun4H**



LEMONGRASS CHICKEN SPRING ROLLS

Nutrition per serving:

Calories: 163 cal | Total Fat: 7g | Sodium: 337mg | Carbohydrates: 18g | Protein: 7g

INGREDIENTS

- 12 oz boneless chicken thighs, finely sliced
- 1 ½ tbsp fish sauce (or soy sauce)
- 2 tbsp brown sugar
- 1 tbsp lemongrass, finely grated (or 1 tsp lemon zest and 1 tsp of grated ginger)
- 1 tbsp lime juice
- 1 garlic clove, finely grated
- 1 tbsp canola oil or other neutral oil, for cooking
- 10 sheets round rice paper
- 2.5 oz dried vermicelli noodles (rice noodles), or other very thin noodles
- 1 package coleslaw mix
- ¼ cup cilantro, chopped
- ¾ cup small mint leaves

SAUCE INGREDIENTS

- 1 ½ tbsp peanut butter
- 2 tbsp hoisin sauce
- 1 tbsp white vinegar (or ½ tbsp lime juice)
- ¼ - ⅓ cup milk
- 1 garlic clove, finely grated
- 2 tsp brown sugar
- ⅛ tsp salt
- ½ tsp chili flakes (optional)

PREP TIME

25 MIN

COOK TIME

6 MIN

SERVINGS

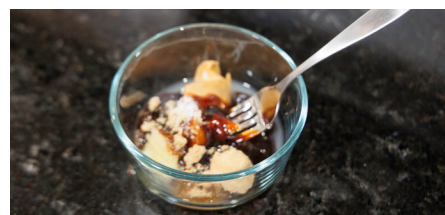
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DIRECTIONS



1. Marinate chicken: Mix fish sauce, brown sugar, lemongrass, lime juice and grated garlic in a bowl. Add chicken and toss to coat. Set aside to marinate for 15 minutes while you prepare everything else (or overnight).



2. Peanut sauce: Mix ingredients together in a small bowl until combined, using milk to adjust the consistency if needed so it's not too thick.



3. Noodles: Place vermicelli noodles in a bowl and cover with hot water for 2 minutes, then drain very well and let cool (or follow packet instructions, if different).



4. Cook chicken: Heat the oil in a large nonstick pan over high heat until very hot. Add half the chicken and cook for 3 minutes, stirring constantly, until lightly caramelized. Remove from the pan and spread out on a plate to cool before using. Repeat with remaining chicken.



5. Rice paper: Fill a large bowl with warm water. Submerge rice paper in the water for 2 seconds, place the smooth side down on a cutting board.



6. Stuffing: Place one-tenth of the chicken, then carrots, cabbages and mint leaves, then noodles last to weigh everything down.



7. Roll: Fold the lower part of the rice paper up over the stuffing, then fold the sides in. Roll to enclose the filling, making it fairly firm. It will self-stick to seal.



8. Serve with peanut dipping sauce.



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NOODLE SALAD WITH TANGY DRESSING

Nutrition per serving:

Calories: 117 kcal | Total Fat: 1g | Sodium: 880mg | Carbohydrates: 26g | Protein: 4g | Fiber: 4g

INGREDIENTS

- 7 oz dried thin vermicelli rice noodles (substitute with any thin noodle)
- 3 cups cucumber, julienned (about 2 cucumbers)
- 3 cups carrots, julienned (about 2 medium carrots)
- 2 ½ cups fresh herbs (basil, cilantro, mint, scallions) packed tightly
- 2 jalapeno peppers, cut into thin rounds (optional)
- Lime wedges (optional)
- Crushed peanuts (optional)

DRESSING INGREDIENTS

- ¼ cup fish sauce (or substitute soy sauce)
- ¼ cup sugar
- ⅓ cup water
- 2 tablespoons lime juice, freshly squeezed (about half a lime)
- 2 teaspoons rice wine vinegar
- 1 clove garlic, minced
- 1 small Thai chili pepper, finely diced (optional)

PREP TIME

15 MIN

COOK TIME

15 MIN

SERVINGS

8-10



DIRECTIONS



1. Rehydrate your noodles by soaking them in boiling water for about 3 minutes or until completely soft. Drain the noodles and set them aside in a colander to drain off excess water.



2. Add all the ingredients for the dressing in a bowl and stir to combine. Taste and adjust according to your preferences.



3. Place the noodles in a large bowl and top with the cucumbers, carrots, basil, cilantro and any other fresh herbs. Add the jalapenos at this time (if using).



4. Add the dressing and toss to combine.



5. Serve immediately.



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BANANA PUDDING

Nutrition per serving:

Calories: 290 kcal | Total Fat: 13g | Carbohydrates: 32g | Sugars: 15g | Protein: 2g | Fiber: 2g

INGREDIENTS

- 7 Vietnamese bananas (or regular bananas)
- $\frac{1}{4}$ - $\frac{1}{2}$ cup small white tapioca pearls (use $\frac{1}{4}$ cup if you want less tapioca pearls or use $\frac{1}{2}$ cup if you want more tapioca pearls)
- 5 tablespoons maple syrup
- $\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon salt
- 1 cup water
- 1 - 13.5 oz can coconut milk
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract

PREP TIME

5 MIN

COOK TIME

15 MIN

SERVINGS

4



DIRECTIONS



1. Soak tapioca pearls in water and set aside.



2. Pour coconut milk into a saucepan and heat on medium heat, stirring frequently so it doesn't burn.



3. While the milk is heating and the pearls are soaking, peel and slice the bananas.



4. Once the milk is warm-hot, pour the pearls in and stir occasionally to make sure it doesn't burn. The pearls will start to turn translucent indicating that they are cooked through.



5. When the pearls are cooked through, add in the bananas, vanilla extract, syrup and salt.



6. Let the mixture cook for another 3-4 minutes, and it's ready to be served hot.



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BALANCE & FLOW CHALLENGE

In Vietnam, daily life often includes walking, stretching and time outdoors. Movement can be calm, focused and a great way to take care of your body and mind.

Your challenge: Complete a 10-minute family flow routine.

How it works:

- Find a calm space (indoors or outside)
- Move together through this simple routine:
 - 1 minute: Deep breathing
 - 2 minutes: Stretching (reach up, side-to-side, touch toes)
 - 2 minutes: Balance (stand on one foot, switch sides)
 - 2 minutes: Slow walking
 - 3 minutes: Light movement (marching, arm circles, gentle jogging)

Family reflection:

What made you feel strong?
What made you feel calm?

Bonus challenge:

Take your routine outside and listen for nature sounds as you move.

FAIR EXHIBIT IDEAS

Natural resources are important to our communities and our everyday lives. Make a poster showing a mixture of local natural resources in your county. Label the natural resources and label with your county name. Enter this poster in the Environmental Stewardship section (319) of your county fair in class 5 for Junior 4-H'ers (grades 3-7) and class 10 for Senior 4-H'ers (grades 8-12).

CIVIC ENGAGEMENT IDEAS

One popular way that people in Vietnam give back to their community is through environmental clean-up and conservation.

Here are some ideas for environmental related community service projects:

- Work with your town or city council to clean up a city park. Pick up trash, fix broken benches and tables, etc.
- Make someplace in your town look nicer, maybe plant flowers at a church, courthouse or even Extension office. Don't forget to pick plants that will be hearty in the Oklahoma weather.
- Research recycling facilities in your community and start a recycling drive if the facilities exist.
- Do a water conservation survey in your house. Encourage your family to conserve water, when possible, like brushing teeth, doing dishes and making showers shorter in length.



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EDUCATIONAL SPOTLIGHT

If you look at a map of Southeast Asia, you'll see a long, thin country shaped like the letter "S" — that's Vietnam. It is a green and watery place where it stays warm and rains a lot. Because of all the rain, Vietnam is one of the best places in the world to grow rice. Rice is a staple food in Vietnam and is eaten every day by many families.

Fun Facts

- Breakfast in a Bowl: Imagine starting your day with a big, steaming bowl of soup! A favorite breakfast is Pho (pronounced like "fuh"), which is a yummy noodle soup topped with fresh herbs like mint and basil.
- Many Vietnamese dishes are carefully balanced with a variety of colors, flavors and ingredients. Traditional cooking often emphasizes harmony and balance in meals.
- Fish sauce is one of Vietnam's most important seasonings and is commonly used for cooking and dipping foods. It's salty and savory, and they use it in almost everything!
- Lucky Money: During the biggest holiday, called Tet (the Lunar New Year), kids get special red envelopes with "lucky money" inside to celebrate the new year.
- Chopsticks: These are the most famous tools in the kitchen! They are used for both cooking and eating. At the table, everyone uses their own pair to pick up bite-sized pieces of food from the middle of the tray.

Connection to Real Life

In Vietnam, dinner time is all about the family circle. Each person usually has their own bowl and chopsticks, while the main dishes are placed in the center of the table for everyone to share. It's like a giant family picnic every night! It's also very important to show respect. Before you take your first bite, you wait for the oldest person (like a grandparent) to start eating first.

Geography and Agriculture

The southern part of Vietnam is home to the Mekong Delta, which people call the "Rice Bowl" of the country. The soil there is so rich that it grows enough rice to help feed people all over the world.





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CONVERSATION STARTERS

- What is your favorite thing we do together as a family?
- What is something you are proud of right now?
- If you could invent something, what would it be?
- What is one food you think should be on every restaurant menu?

REPORTING INFORMATION

Submit participation through ZSuite at the end of each month. Include a photo of you preparing the recipe, a photo of you enjoying the meal with family or friends, and your reflection responses:

- **I tried ...** (New recipe, ingredient or skill)
- **I improved ...** (Something you got better at)
- **I'm proud of ...** (Your favorite part of the experience)



CHOPSTICK CHALLENGE

What You'll Need:

- A pair of chopsticks
- Two bowls or cups
- Small items to move (dried beans, cotton balls, mini marshmallows, grapes or pom-poms)

Directions:

- Place the items in one bowl or cup.
- Use your chopsticks to pick up the items one at a time.
- Move the items to the empty bowl or cup.
- Time yourself and see how long it takes to move all the items!

Which item was the easiest to pick up?

Which item was the hardest?

Can you beat your time on a second try?

Check out this link to learn how to use chopsticks:

everythingchopsticks.com/how-to-use-chopsticks.html