

# Vietnamese Crab & Shrimp Thick Noodle Soup (Banh Canh Tom Cua)

Serves 5-7

## INGREDIENTS

- 1 large yellow onion or 4 shallots (leave whole)
- 3 lb pork bones (neck bones and/or spareribs)
- 1 teaspoon (for cleaning) plus 1 tablespoon salt (for stock)
- 3 liters water
- Large chunk daikon (peel)
- 2 tablespoons chicken bouillon powder
- 1 tablespoon plus 1 teaspoon granulated white sugar
- 1 teaspoon fish sauce
- 1 tablespoon annatto oil
- 1 drop orange gel food coloring (optional)
- 1/3 cup tapioca starch
- 1/2 cup cold water

## Noodles

- 1.5-2 lbs Banh Canh or Udon Noodles
- 1/2 teaspoon sesame oil

## Meat Toppings 16 oz (1 lb) cooked crab meat

- 1 tablespoon annatto oil
- 1 teaspoon minced garlic
- 10-15 cooked shrimp (size 21-25, peel and devein)

## Garnishes

- Black pepper
- 2 scallions/green onions (slice thinly)
- Small bunch cilantro (slice thinly)
- Fried shallots
- 1 lime (cut into wedges)

## INSTRUCTIONS

1. Bake onion/shallots in the oven at 350°F for about 40 minutes or until soft. Allow them to cool then peel/scrap off all charred areas to prevent browning the broth. Set aside.
2. Clean the pork bones thoroughly: Add the pork bones to a large stock pot and fill with water to cover by 1 inch. Add salt (1 teaspoon). Parboil the bones for 5 minutes or when you see a lot of foam forming. Drain content of the pot into a colander placed in the sink and rinse bones under cold running water. This cleaning will keep the stock clear. It also helps to get rid of the foul pork smell.
3. In a large stock pot, add water (3 liters), cleaned pork bones, roasted onion/shallots and daikon. Bring pot to a boil and reduce the heat to a very low simmer. Cook for 1 hour, uncovered. If you are reusing the same stock pot that was used to clean the bones, make sure to clean the pot thoroughly before making stock. After 1 hour, remove onions/shallots and daikon from the pot and discard.
4. Season stock with pork/chicken/mushroom stock powder, sugar, salt (1 tablespoon) and fish sauce.
5. Add annatto oil and/or food coloring to the stock for color.
6. To thicken the broth, in a small bowl, mix tapioca starch and water (1/2 cup) until completely dissolved. Add slurry to broth and simmer for an additional 5 minute to thicken.
7. Cook the Banh Canh noodles per packaged instructions. Toss gently with sesame seed oil to prevent sticking.
8. To prep the crab. heat annatto oil (1 tablespoon) in a small skillet at medium-high. Add garlic and pan-fry until fragrant. Add cooked crab meat and lightly saute until colored and aromatic. Set aside.
9. To assemble, add a handful of Banh Canh noodles into a bowl. Ladle broth over noodles. Add 2-3 shrimp, desired amount of crab meat and pork spare ribs from broth. Garnish with a sprinkle of black pepper, scallions/green onions, cilantro and fried shallots. Serve with a wedge of lime on the side.