

# Phở Queen Cooking

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## Vietnamese IP Chicken Porridge (Cháo Gà)

Vietnamese Chicken Porridge is a rice gruel for breakfast or lunch. It is light yet filling. Like chicken soup in the United States, it is used as a Vietnamese cold remedy. Many people believe that the warmth of the broth and the wholesomeness of the chicken help regain one's strength.

This recipe can be used with minimally 4 ingredients: chicken, rice, water, and salt. However, the extra ingredients enhance the flavor. If we have the extra ingredients, why not use them. There are many ways to make Cháo Gà. My way is one of many. I like to start with simple successes and then add on.

Serves 4 people

About 60 minutes

- 2 chicken breasts, approximately 1 to 2 pounds
- 1 cup of Jasmine rice
- 6 cups of water (or optional chicken broth)
- ¼ cup finely chopped onion
- 1 to 2 slices of ginger
- 2 tablespoons fish sauce or soy sauce
- ¼ teaspoon salt
- ¼ teaspoon sugar
- ¼ teaspoon black pepper
- ½ lemon, quartered
- ¼ cup of finely chopped fresh cilantro (optional)
- ½ pound bean sprouts (optional)
- Sprinkle of ground roasted peanuts (optional)



First, put a cup of rice in a bowl and rinse the starch from the rice. When the water becomes clear, drain the water. It'll take approximately 2 to 3 minutes. The main reason I clean the rice because sometimes we find unwanted items such as little pebbles, dirt, or even bugs. The bugs are not uncommon especially when you are keeping the bag of rice in the moist area and/or on the ground.



Roast the rice in a frying pan or an IP (Instant Pot) using sauté mode. Make sure the saute heat is medium or low. Roast the rice until all the water has evaporated and the rice is dried. This will take about 3 to 4 minutes. You don't have to roast the rice. This method adds a subtle nutty roasting flavor to the porridge.

Pour about 4 to 6 cups of water in the IP and push sauté high mode. Wait for 6 minutes or until the water boils, add the chicken breast for one quick minute. At this point, we are only cleaning the chicken to reduce excess fat and foul smell. Press cancel or turn the pot off. Drain the water.

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Leave the chicken in the pot and add 6 fresh cups of water or chicken broth. The chicken broth will help enhance the flavor of your porridge. However, if you don't have chicken broth, water will do. Also remember, if you use mostly chicken broth, reduce the fish sauce or salt seasoning. The chicken broth may have seasoning of its own. You can add less seasoning and slowly add as needed to taste.

Press pressure cook. If you are using 1 to 2 pounds of chicken, adjust the cooking time to 7 minutes.

The time depends on the weight of the chicken. Check the IP pressure cooker time chart. In my case, I have 1 lb. 2 oz. chicken so I put the timer for 7 minutes. It will take around 2½ minutes for the IP to pressurize and then cook for 7 minutes. When you are cooking on a regular stove, it will take about 30 to 40 minutes to make the porridge broth.

While the IP is going, clean the cilantro, onion, and ginger. Dice the onion or leave it whole. I usually leave it whole so I can scoop it out when the porridge is done. I mostly want the onion flavor. You can



leave it in if you like the onion texture. By the time the porridge is completed, the onion will be very mushy. Cut the cilantro into small pieces. Sliced one to two slices of ginger. Remember to remove the skin. You can add more ginger if you like. I prefer just a scent of ginger flavor. Quarter the lemon.

Once the IP pressure cooking is done, open the valve to depressurize. It takes about 2 minutes. I usually cover the valve with a towel that you do not mind getting wet or dirty. The steam and water may spatter everywhere. Once the IP is depressurized, you can now open the lid.

Add rice, onion, ginger, and pepper to the chicken. Close the lid. Now press the porridge button. Adjust the timer to cook for 15 minutes. When using a cooking stove, it will take at least 60 minutes before the porridge is the right consistency.

Once the time is up, I leave the IP to depressurize naturally for 15 to 17 minutes or manually depressurize the IP. Press cancel when the lid can be opened. Check for the porridge consistency. It should not be too thick where the spoon gets stuck moving around. It will be like soup. Press sauté and have it at low mode.



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At this point, you should be able to use a spoon and a fork or chopsticks to shred the cooked chicken breasts inside the pot. It should fall apart pretty easily. Add fish sauce or soy sauce and salt. If you do not have either fish sauce or soy sauce, you can try salt only. Add 1 teaspoon first. If it is not salty enough add another teaspoon and so on. I would not add all 2 tablespoons of salt at the same time. It may end up too salty and you will have a hard time fixing it.



Add sugar and pepper. Instead of MSG, we use sugar. It is a great flavor enhancer to compliment the salt. Mix well for another minute or two. This will help thicken the broth. The longer you cook the thicker the porridge. Make it to the consistency that you prefer. Turn off the IP and get ready to serve.

When served, you can add cilantro and bean sprouts. Squeeze in the lemon juice and sprinkle over the porridge with ground roasted peanuts. Soothe your throbbing and scratchy throat or warm yourself with a pleasant bowl of porridge on a cool drizzly morning!!!