



The Kitchen At Cooking Studio is holding moon cake making classes.

PROVIDED TO CHINA DAILY

Do-it-yourself moon cakes

To celebrate the Mid-autumn Festival, bake some moon cakes, Shi Yingying tells how.

Moon cakes, elaborately decorated small round pastries, are a traditional gift during the Mid-autumn Festival, which falls on Sept 22 this year.

Once considered an expensive delicacy by Chinese, they have become what fruit cake is to those who celebrate Christmas. Often in elaborate packages, this seasonal food is given a gift, but rarely actually consumed in more than minute quantities.

The cakes, shaped like a hockey puck and very dense, are generally filled with thick sweetened pastes of seeds, beans or fruits. But as the range of food available to the Chinese expanded, what was once considered a rare and delectable treat is now considered too sugary and is avoided.

The simple way to have a control over sugar intake is to make them yourself.

"I've figured the ones I made are less sugary and softer than oily moon cakes sold in the stores," said Dong Shuangyan, 25, after her first experience of making Cantonese-style moon cakes at The Kitchen At Cooking Studio. The studio is a catering school that offers cooking classes.

"I would rather make some low-calorie and healthy ones myself for family and friends," she said.

Rather than a trend, homemade moon cakes are more like the return of old traditions for Tang Zhen, who teaches the moon cake class at his studio and is also the executive chef at Dongjiao State Guest Hotel. "Only 10 to 15 years ago, making moon cakes was an important custom of the Mid-autumn Festival," he said.

Unlike the currently popular Suzhou-style moon cakes that have meat inside and are more complicated to make, the sweet Cantonese-style variety involve little effort — just make the crust.

"The inside can be lotus paste, red bean paste or coconut paste, or even a salted duck egg yolk if you like," said chef Tang. The chef said that many good cake fillings are available in food markets and make up 70 to 80 per cent of the cake's weight. "Our job is to make the 30 or 20 per cent that's left."

Start by using 750 grams of low-gluten flour. Gradually add 210g of peanuts, 540g of sugar syrup and 5g of alkaline water to the flour. To create a soft dough that is enough to make 30 moon cake crusts, it is essential to mix the ingredients together slowly for about five minutes.

"The trick is to mix everything gently," said chef Tang. "Remember it doesn't have to be shaggy and sticky because it's not going to ferment later on, we just have to make sure everything is mixed up well."

The next step is more fun. Roll the filling round and press the dough flat. Keep in mind that the weight of the dough and weight of the filling need to be the same. For example, 90g dough will need 90g of filling. Now place it into the traditional moon cake mold, which is made of wood. Molds cost about 60 yuan, personalized molds with special patterns cost 100 yuan to 200 yuan.

Turn out the dough onto a lightly floured mold and press to fill the mold. The result is a standard moon cake shape with beautiful pattern on the surface. Brush the beaten egg yolk evenly on the patterned side and bake the moon cakes in the oven for about 20 minutes.

Don't be edacious and eat it up right after the bake, instead, put the moon cake aside at room temperature for about four to five days to allow the grease to release, softening and moistening the skin. Then it's time to enjoy.

information

Apollo Business Center

The serviced office provider, Apollo Business Center, has expanded its network of offices to four locations in Shanghai. These are:
 Jing'an Center, 1440 Yan'an Road M
 Tomson Center, 710 Dongfang Road
 Xuhui Center, 1065 Zhaojiabang Road
 Hongqiao Center, 83 Loushuan Road
 Toll free number: 400-883-5600



Regus Business Center

With products and services ranging from fully equipped offices, virtual offices, professional meeting rooms, business lounges and video communication studios, the Regus Group has eight business centers in Shanghai, more than 35 across Greater China and 1,000 worldwide. The Shanghai locations are:
 1. Bund Center: 222 Yan'an Road E, Huangpu
 2. Jin Mao Tower: 88 Shiji Avenue, Lujiazui
 3. Nanjing West Road: Shanghai Oriental Center, 699 Nanjing Road W, Jing'an
 4. One Corporate Avenue: 222 Hubin Road, Luwan
 5. ShanghaiMart Hongqiao: 2299 Yan'an Road W, Changning
 6. Shui On Plaza: 333 Huaihai Road M, Luwan
 7. Silver Center: 1388 Shaanxi Road N, Putuo
 8. Standard Chartered Lujiazui: 201 Shiji Avenue, Lujiazui
 Enquiry Number: 400-120-1205



Professional Car Rental from Hertz

Available in over 147 countries and regions worldwide including China, Hertz provides a full range of services customized to the needs of individuals or businesses.



It has a wide variety of car models to cater to all your needs, from self-drive rentals to VIP airport transfers or even prestige cars for weddings and events. Expect reliable and quality service from Hertz.

Call toll free 800 988 1336 / 400 888 1336

Email: ChinaReservationCtr@Hertz.com

Book online at www.hertzhchina.com

Central location

A stone's throw from the nightlife precinct of Xintiandi, the Ascott Huaihai Road Shanghai offers a premier urban lifestyle with its prestigious central location. Close to many restaurants, cafés, bars and boutiques, it is also located in a business area for added convenience.

282 Huaihai Road M

021- 2329-8888

French treat

With its two restaurants nestled on the tree-lined Wulumuqi Road and in the Gubei area, Café Montmartre offers a variety of authentic French cuisine. Its focus on rich and classic dishes ranges from the simple cream of mushroom soup to the robust balance of grilled lamb chops, with business lunch set as a steal. The restaurants are open for lunch and dinner with a weekend brunch at the Hongmei Road location.

Gubei branch: 3911 Hongmei Road, 021-6261-8089

Changle branch: 66-68 Wulumuqi Road M, 021-5158-9377