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Spicy Orange Beef Stir-Fry

I think it's fair to say that growing up in West Virginia in the '60s, there weren't lots of gastronomic opportunities. But my family did eat out frequently at a local Chinese restaurant, where my developing palate quickly became hooked on the exotic tastes and textures of Cantonese-American cuisine. If you, like me, have a regular and unrelenting hankering for spicy orange beef, you're going to love being able to make this citrusy dish at home. The flavors are fresh and bright, and this version is *waaaay* healthier than the usual restaurant plate, since the meat is simply cooked up with the vegetables instead of deep-fried.

8 oz./225 g beef sirloin, thinly sliced into 3-in./7.5 cm strips
2 tbsp soy sauce, plus more if needed
Freshly ground pepper
Zest and juice of 1 orange
1 tbsp dry white wine
1 tbsp hoisin sauce
1 tbsp sugar
1 tsp cornstarch
1 tsp toasted sesame oil
1 tsp chili garlic sauce, plus more if needed
2 tbsp vegetable oil
1 tbsp peeled and minced fresh ginger
1 garlic clove, minced
2 carrots, peeled and thinly sliced
2 green onions, white and tender green parts, thinly sliced
2 cups/ 280 g snow peas
Microwave steam-in-the-bag rice for serving
2 tbsp minced fresh cilantro

1. In a medium bowl, toss the sliced meat with 1 tbsp of the soy sauce and a few grinds of black pepper. Set aside at room temperature.

2. In a small bowl, combine the orange zest and juice, wine, hoisin sauce, sugar, cornstarch, sesame oil, chili garlic sauce, and remaining 1 tbsp soy sauce and mix well to make a stir-fry sauce. Set aside.

3. Heat a 12-in./30.5-cm skillet over medium-high heat and add 1 tbsp of the vegetable oil. When the oil shimmers, add the meat and stir-fry until it's almost cooked through, about 2 minutes. Transfer the meat to a plate. Add the remaining 1 tbsp vegetable oil, the ginger, and garlic to the

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hot pan and stir until fragrant, about 30 seconds. Add the carrots, green onions, and snow peas and continue to cook, tossing the vegetables around in the pan, until they're crisp-tender, about 2 minutes longer. The meat juices will cook onto the bottom of the pan, so if it threatens to burn, reduce the heat.

4. Return the meat to the pan and pour in the stir-fry sauce, tossing the veggies and meat for another minute or so and scraping up the browned bits from the pan bottom. The sauce will thicken as it heats up. Taste and season with more soy sauce or chili garlic sauce if you want the dish saltier and spicier.

5. Mound the cooked rice onto two warmed plates and top it with the meat and vegetables. Sprinkle with the cilantro and serve hot.

It's That Easy: For the best-tasting zest, look for oranges with a dimpled surface instead of smooth skin, and choose the heaviest oranges in the bin for the most juice.

Extra Hungry? Instead of white rice, choose brown rice. It has more fiber, so it's more healthful and keeps you full for a longer period of time.

In the Glass: An Oregon Pinot Noir from Firesteed has a lot of earthy red fruit to complement the orange and spice in this stir-fry.