

Shanghai Red Bean Crêpe



Pureed red bean paste is wrapped in a thin blanket of crisp-fried crepes in this sweet Shanghai classic. Traditionally served on its own, toppings such as toasted sesame seeds and light syrups are certainly welcome. My favourite addition is Japanese *kinako*, an aromatic flour of roasted soybeans, adding a subtle nuttiness that always plays well with the rich sweetness of *azuki* bean paste.

This simple recipe is probably the best reason to own a rectangular pan (or a lame excuse for justifying impulse buys meant to appease kitchen gearheads). A few rows of uniformly-sized crepes in the morning is always a great way to start the day (or instant therapy for some undiagnosed condition).

Still not convinced to make this *right now*? Red bean crepes are also great for sharpening your chopstick handling skills. Using nothing but two sticks, make a few batches without tearing a single crepe and you'll surpass Mr. Miyagi in no time.

Shanghai Red Bean Crêpe

makes 3 crepes (4 to 6 servings)



1 large egg
3/4 cup cold water
1/2 cup all-purpose flour
1/4 to 1/2 cup peanut or vegetable oil
9 tablespoons pureed red bean paste

Roasted soybean powder or toasted sesame seeds (optional)

Instructions:

Place the all-purpose flour in a mixing bowl. In a separate container, beat the large egg with the cold water until thoroughly mixed. Add the egg mixture to the flour and whisk until the batter is smooth.

Heat a non-stick skillet or rectangular pan over medium-low heat. Brush the bottom lightly with peanut oil. Add 1/3 of the batter to the pan, tilting it to ensure that the bottom is evenly coated. Once the crepe is set, spread 3 tablespoons of the red bean paste in the middle, forming a rectangular shape.

Gently fold in the outer edges of the crepe to form a red bean hot pocket. Add more oil to the pan if desired and continue pan-frying the crepe until browned and slightly crispy on both sides.



*Top row: scraggly crepes made before that first cup of morning coffee
Bottom row: finally awake*



Underneath the Shanghai Red Bean Crepe, or why owning a rectangular non-stick pan is totally worth it.

To Serve:

Slice the crepes into 4 to 6 bite-sized pieces. Serve on its own, with fresh fruit, sprinkled with toasted sesame seeds, or my personal favourite, dusted with roasted soybean powder.