

## Fried Rice With Peaches and Kale

By Adrienne Su, professor of creative writing and author of *Peach State*, a book of poems that pay homage to the domestic kitchen

### Ingredients

- 4 cups leftover cooked jasmine rice, cold from the fridge, roughly broken up with a large spoon (*If you don't have leftover cold rice, you can cook rice specifically for this recipe, but do it far enough in advance that it can cool and dry out slightly in the refrigerator; otherwise, the grains will stick together and make the dish gummy. Another option is to order an extra container of rice when getting Chinese takeout and chill it in its carton overnight.*)
- 2 tablespoons vegetable or other neutral oil
- 1 large clove garlic, minced
- 1 teaspoon grated fresh ginger
- 1 tablespoon fish sauce, soy sauce or tamari
- 1 small red onion, minced
- ½ pound kale, including stems if not more than 1/4-inch in diameter (*TIP: If your kale stems are too large to use, chopped garlic scapes make a good substitute.*)
- 1 large peach, close to ripe but still firm (*TIP: This can be made with frozen peaches. Thaw partially; slight frozenness will help the pieces hold their shape.*)
- 1 teaspoon fresh lemon juice
- ½ teaspoon vinegar (rice, white balsamic or white wine)
- ½ teaspoon light brown sugar (optional, depending on sweetness of peach)
- Salt and pepper
- A few sprigs fresh mint or cilantro as garnish (optional)
- 1 serrano or jalapeño chile, thinly sliced, as garnish (optional)

### Directions

1. Wash the kale and shake dry. Strip the leaves from their stems with your hands. Roughly chop the leaves into approximately 1-inch squares. If the stems are ¼-inch in diameter or smaller, trim off the woody base and chop the stems crosswise, to about the size of green peas. Keep the stems apart from the leaves.
2. Set up your mise en place, ideally in this order: kale stems, garlic and ginger, red onion, kale leaves, rice and garnishes. Have the seasonings at hand.
3. Just before cooking time, peel the peach, cut it into thick slices and put in a medium bowl. Taste the peach. If it is not sweet, add light brown sugar to the bowl. Add the vinegar and lemon juice, and toss gently.
4. Heat a wok or large skillet over medium-high heat, then add the oil. Tilt and rotate the pan so that oil coats most of the cooking surface. Add the kale stems and stir-fry, constantly tossing and moving them with a spatula, until they are shiny and bright green, about 1 minute. (*TIP: Leftover grilled shrimp, scallops or salmon make a terrific addition; cut into ½-inch pieces and add right after the kale.*)
5. Add the garlic and ginger and continue to toss quickly to prevent burning. As soon as the garlic and ginger are sizzling and fragrant, which should take only a few seconds, add the red onion. Stir-fry everything for about 1 more minute, then add the kale leaves. (*TIP: You may have to wilt the first handful or two before you add the next.*)
6. Keep everything moving so that it can be coated with the now-flavorful oil, and when all of the kale has reached a manageable size, add the rice, breaking up clumps while lifting and turning everything in the pan so that it sears slightly but doesn't burn. It will take a minute or two to break up all the rice. Scrape crispy patches up with a thin spatula, and fold into the rest.
7. Add the fish sauce or soy sauce and salt, and combine well.
8. Turn the heat down to medium and push the rice and vegetables to the sides of the pan, leaving an empty area in the center. Add the remaining ½ tablespoon oil to the center, giving it a few seconds to heat, and carefully add the peach slices, lifting them out of their juices. Drizzle any peach juice from the bottom of the bowl over the rice.
9. Let the slices sizzle briefly, then flip them while breaking them into bite-size pieces with your spatula. Within a minute or so, the peaches should have a few browned spots, but don't despair if they do not; just move on so the fruit doesn't disintegrate (though the finished dish will still taste good if it does).
10. Now mix everything together. Turn the heat to low while you taste and adjust for salt and season with pepper. Turn out into a serving dish, adding garnishes if you like.



#### Wine Pairing: Riesling

In a dry or off-dry style, this light-bodied white wine with low alcohol levels is extremely versatile and can exude expressions of tree and orchard fruit like pear, apple and even Meyer lemon. This is a pairing you will revisit meal in and meal out.