



TORI'S PORK/BEEF/GOOSE "NEUTRAL" CONGEE

For me, and almost every Chinese person I know, congee is the comfort food we crave when we're sick.

In past years, I've made my congee with chicken broth, but my Hongkonger daughter-in-law let me know that chicken is considered to be a warming (yang) food and not good for fevers. She recommended beef, goose, or pork which she called neutral, instead.

Chinese medicine approach to foods is complicated and individualized. Vegetables, spices, and meats (all of which are yin, yang, or neutral) can be combined to offset and enhance the desired results. My favorite cooking ingredient, ginger, is a yang warming spice. Cooking methods can also affect properties—steamed produces more yin, stir-fry more yang.

My take away? Whatever healthy comfort food that makes you feel better is probably perfect for you. My family loved my Pork/Beef/Goose "Neutral" Congee!

Shared with aloha,

Tori Eldridge

Recipe for Tori's Pork/Beef/Goose "Neutral" Congee

Ingredients:

- ¼ cup (or less) dried shitake, broken into bits and soaked in boiling water
- 1 teaspoon sesame or other preferred oil
- 1 teaspoon to 1 tablespoon minced garlic
- 1 teaspoon to 1 tablespoon minced ginger
- 1 to 3 chopped green onions
- ¼ cup chopped cilantro (optional)
- ¼ cup (optional) diced fresh veggies like mushrooms, carrots, corn
- 1 cup diced roasted goose, pork, or beef
- ¾ cup short grain white rice
- 10 cups mixture of bone broth, shitake broth, and water (ratio depends on the concentration and/or blend of broths and how flavorful or bland you want your congee)
- ¼ cup (or more) dried bonito flakes (This is optional, but I think it makes a huge difference.)
- Splash of soy or tamari sauce
- Optional flavorings include a splash of fish sauce or teaspoon of miso paste

Instructions:

- Soak shitake mushrooms in boiling water until soft. (Keep the water.)
- Sauté garlic, ginger, green onions (and any diced fresh vegetables) in oil until fragrant.
- Add meat and sauté until heated.
- Add rice and shitake mushrooms. Sauté to infuse flavors.
- Add meat broth, shitake broth, and water.
- Flavor with a dash of soy or tamari sauce and/or fish sauce if desired.
- Bring to boil, then reduce temperature to low and simmer for 1 hour.
- Add bonito flakes and simmer until the gruel reaches desired consistency (10 to 45 minutes).
- Turn off heat and let congee sit on the stove to enjoy.

Garnished with added meat, green onions, cilantro, vegetables, or flavorful sauce of choice.

As the congee thickens on the stove top or during the days in the fridge, add more broth when you reheat it for desired soupiness.

Find more recipes on the Readers pages of my website: ToriEldridge.com.

Share your photos on social media and let me know how you enjoyed Tori's Pork/Beef/Goose "Neutral" Congee!

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