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Vegetarian Golden Bags | Toong Tong

Makes 30 golden bags

These snacks are shaped like little golden bags of money that signifies wealth, hence their name. The shell, a simple spring roll wrapper, is stuffed with a vegetarian mix and deep-fried. Thai people are extremely superstitious about how we name our food. We try to give a positive or lucky name to anything we eat on special occasions. Golden bags are often served at festivals and parties—especially the ones I throw!

30 (6-inch) fresh spring roll wrappers
15 white peppercorns
2 tablespoons thinly sliced cilantro roots with 3-inch stems or cilantro stems
2 tablespoons unpeeled Thai garlic cloves or thinly sliced peeled regular garlic
3 tablespoons sunflower oil
2 medium Yukon Gold potatoes, peeled and cut into ¼-inch dice
3½ ounces (100 g) shiitake mushrooms, coarsely chopped into ¼-inch dice
1 carrot, peeled and cut into ¼-inch dice
¼ cup thin soy sauce
½ cup fresh green peas
10 fresh water chestnuts, peeled and cut into ¼-inch dice
2 tablespoons vegetarian mushroom oyster sauce
1 cup water
1 bundle of fresh chives
4 cups canola oil, for deep-frying
Sweet Chili Sauce, for serving

1. Cut the spring roll wrappers into 5-inch circles. I like to stack the spring roll wrapper circles on a small plate. This makes it easier when assembling the golden bags. Place the stack of wrappers in a resealable plastic bag or cover with a damp kitchen towel to prevent them from drying out.
2. Using a stone mortar and pestle, grind the white peppercorns to a fine powder. Add the cilantro roots and garlic and grind to a paste. Transfer to a small bowl.
3. In a large wok or skillet over medium heat, heat the sunflower oil. Add the paste mixture and cook, stirring constantly, for 1 minute. Stir in the potatoes, mushrooms, carrots, and thin soy sauce and cook, stirring occasionally, for 3 minutes.
4. Add the green peas, water chestnuts, and mushroom oyster sauce. Increase the heat to high and cook, stirring occasionally, for 2 minutes. The green peas and water chestnuts will not be fully cooked. Transfer the filling to a large plate to cool.

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5. In a medium saucepan, bring the water to a boil over high heat. When the water is boiling, add the chives and cook for 1 minute. Drain, rinse with cold water, wrap in a kitchen towel, and squeeze out excess water from the top to the bottom, making sure to keep them intact. Ensuring that all the water is squeezed out will prevent the chives from getting brittle when you deep-fry them. Lay the chives on a baking sheet and set aside.
6. Lay a spring roll wrapper on a work surface. Use a spoon to scoop about 2 tablespoons of the filling onto the middle of the wrapper. Lift one side of the wrapper at a time, pinching with your index finger and thumb to pleat a little bit of the wrapper at a time to make the bag as tight as possible, until all the edges meet each other at the top. Wrap a chive twice around the gathered part of the wrapper, making sure to leave enough chive at each end to tie a tight double knot. Make sure the knot is tight to prevent the bag from exploding when it is deep-fried. Repeat until all the golden bags are made.
7. Heat the canola oil in a large pot over high heat. When the oil is hot, working in batches of no more than 10 golden bags, use a slotted spoon to carefully drop the golden bags, one at a time, into the oil. Deep-fry until golden brown, 5 to 6 minutes. Use the slotted spoon to transfer the golden bags to a plate lined with paper towel to drain excess oil. Repeat until all the golden bags have been deep-fried.
8. Serve with the sweet chili sauce.

To learn more about Northern Thai cuisine and recipes, check out Chef Nuit Regular's award-winning cookbook, [*Kiin: Recipes & Stories from Northern Thailand*](#).