

Fried Shallots

Swick

Makes 1 to 2.0 cup | Active Time: 30 minutes | Total Time: 30 minutes

Step 1: Preparing the Shallots

- 600 grs shallots (approx 12), peeled*
- 2 1/2 cups peanut oil

Note: To make the shallots easier to peel, place them into a bowl and cover with boiling water for 5 minutes. Then drain and let cool slightly before peeling. Soaking the shallots also seems with your eyes watering. When peeling the shallots try to keep the core intact as this will make it a bit easier when slicing them on the mandoline.

To prepare the shallots for frying, use a mandoline and slice, across the grain, quite thinly — about 1/16th rounds. The mandoline not only makes the process a lot quicker, but it also helps to produce nice even slices, which means even cooking. Just be careful when slicing the shallots as the mandoline is sharp — or at least it should be.

Next, line a baking tray with several layers of paper towels — like 6 or 8 layers. Also, set a fine-mesh strainer over a large heatproof bowl.

Step 2: Frying & Finishing the Shallots

To cook the shallots, place the shallots into a wok or medium saucepan and cover them with the oil. Turn the heat to medium-high and cook, stirring frequently.

At first, it will seem like it is taking a long time for the shallots to start to get any color but once the moisture starts to evaporate, the process will speed up.

Once they start to take on a bit of color, continue to cook the shallots, stirring almost constantly as they fry to ensure they cook evenly. This should take another 7 to 10 minutes.

As soon as the shallots turn a nice golden color, turn the heat down to low and continue to cook for another minute or so. Then when they are almost done, turn off the heat and continue to stir for another 30 seconds or so.

It's tricky at first to know exactly when to remove the shallots from the oil as they continue to color even after they come out of the oil due to the carry overcooking. The more you make them, the better your timing will become.

Working rather quickly, carefully strain the shallots through a fine-mesh sieve using a slotted spoon. Alternatively, you can simply pour the oil and shallots into a large heat-proof bowl lined with the strainer — just be careful with the hot oil.

Next, place the strained shallots onto the paper-towel-lined baking tray and spread them out into an even layer, and season with salt. Let the shallots drain on the paper towel for a minute or so and then carefully lift the top layer or two of paper towels and carefully transfer the shallots to the next layer of paper towels underneath.

Repeat this process until shallots are on the last layer of paper towels and relatively grease-free.

Let the shallots and oil cool to room temperature before storing. Store the shallots and oil in separate airtight containers.

Fried shallots are best the day they were made but they can be made the day before if you really need to make them ahead of time.

Chef's Notes

These Fried Shallots are generally used/served as part of the following dishes/recipes:

Hainanese Baked Tofu

Hainanese Rice Pilaf

Hainanese Roasted Cauliflower

Hainanese Paste – this can be made ahead of time and frozen.

Garlic-Soy Sauce

Scallion-Ginger Sauce

Singapore Chili Sauce – this can also be made ahead of time and frozen.