



# March 2026 : Gochugaru

**Gochugaru** (*Capsicum annuum*) - also known as Korean chili flakes or Korean chili powder, is a staple spice in Korean cuisine, prized for its vibrant red color, moderate heat, and slightly smoky, fruity flavor. Gochugaru is made from sun-dried Korean red chili peppers, which are typically deseeded before being ground to ensure a milder, more flavorful heat. Though gochugaru is a key ingredient in many Korean dishes, chili peppers are not native to Korea. In fact, chili peppers were introduced to Korea by Portuguese traders via Japan in the 17<sup>th</sup> century.



**Culinary Uses:** The name “gochugaru” is derived from “gochu,” meaning “chili pepper,” and “garu,” meaning “powder,” though it is more often sold as coarse flakes rather than a fine powder. One of the most well known uses of gochugaru is in the preparation of kimchi - a Korean fermented vegetable condiment typically made with napa cabbage and radishes. If you like the flavor profile of gochugaru flakes, you can substitute it in most dishes that call for chili pepper flakes for a milder, more nuanced flavor.



**Health Benefits:** Gochugaru, being derived from chili peppers, contains capsaicin, a compound known for its potential health benefits. Capsaicin can act as an anti-inflammatory and pain reliever.

In traditional Korean medicine, chili peppers are believed to possess warming properties. They are often used to stimulate circulation and promote sweating, which is thought to help detoxify the body and alleviate cold symptoms. Gochugaru is sometimes incorporated into remedies for digestive issues.

## **Gochugaru vs. Gochujang - what's the difference?**

Gochugaru is actually a key ingredient in gochujang, a thick fermented condiment which is spicy, sweet, and smoky. Gochujang can be used on its own as a condiment, mixed with other condiments to make a dipping sauce, or used as a marinade for meats and vegetables.



**Fun Facts:** Gochu, or red pepper, is used to cleanse impurities and to chase away evil spirits in the event of an illness or the birth of a son. The pepper's red color was believed to symbolize the sun and its spicy flavor to be effective for chasing away bad forces, while its shape was associated with the birth of a male infant.

## MISO CHICKEN IN GINGER SCALLION BROTH



**Total Time:** 1 hour

**Servings:** 4 - 6

### Ingredients:

- 8 boneless, skinless chicken thighs (about 3 lbs.)
- Salt and pepper
- 2 large garlic cloves, smashed but not peeled, plus ½ tsp. grated garlic
- 1 (2-inch) knob ginger, peeled and thickly sliced, plus 1 tsp. grated fresh ginger
- 1 small onion, thinly sliced
- 6 cups chicken broth (optional)
- ¼ cup mirin
- 4 Tbsp. yellow or red miso
- ½ tsp. gochugaru
- 2 Tbsp. rice wine vinegar
- 2 Tbsp. granulated sugar
- 2 cups leeks, white and tender green parts, chopped into ½-inch pieces
- ½ cup thinly sliced scallions, for garnish

### Directions:

1. Put chicken thighs in a large pot, seasoning well with salt and pepper on both sides. Add smashed garlic cloves, ginger slices, onion, 6 cups water (or chicken broth, if you prefer) and mirin, and bring to a boil. Reduce heat to a simmer and cook, covered, for 30 minutes, until tender. Remove chicken to a baking dish. Strain broth into a bowl. Place back into the pot, and keep warm. Heat oven to 375 degrees.
2. In a small bowl, combine miso, gochugaru, grated garlic, grated ginger, vinegar and sugar. Add a little hot broth to thin, then smear mixture over chicken and coat well.
3. Bake chicken until browned and glazed, about 20 minutes.
4. While chicken is cooking, bring broth to a simmer, taste and adjust seasoning. Add leeks and cook until just done — soft, but still green, about 5 minutes.
5. To serve, slice chicken into ¼-inch pieces and divide among soup bowls, then ladle broth on top. Spoon any remaining miso mixture from pan over chicken. Garnish with scallions.

## CHARRED CAULIFLOWER WITH GOCHUGARU DUST

**Servings:** 4

### Ingredients:

- 2 tsp. kosher salt
- 1 tsp. gochugaru
- ½ tsp. smoked paprika
- ½ tsp. dark brown sugar
- ½ tsp. garlic powder
- 1 head cauliflower (about 2 lbs., sliced into large florets)
- Vegetable oil

### Directions:

1. In a small bowl, stir together the first five ingredients. Set the gochugaru dust aside.
2. Position oven rack in the highest position and preheat the broiler.
3. Arrange the cauliflower on a sheet pan in a single layer, drizzle with oil, and gently toss. Broil until the edges are charred, 5 - 15 minutes. Keep an eye on it so it doesn't burn.
4. Arrange the charred cauliflower on a large plate and dust generously with the gochugaru dust.

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## CUCUMBER KIMCHI



**Servings:** 6, as a snack or condiment

### Ingredients:

- 3 small cucumbers, cut into ½-inch slices
- 2 Tbsp. kosher salt
- 1 Tbsp. sugar
- 1 Tbsp. gochugaru
- ¼ cup mirin
- 6 Tbsp. rice vinegar
- 1 tsp. grated garlic
- 1 tsp. fermented krill or baby shrimp (optional)

### Directions:

1. Place the cucumbers in a medium-size bowl, then sprinkle with the salt. Let stand 20 minutes.
2. Rinse cucumbers in cold water to remove salt, drain and pat dry.
3. Return cucumbers to bowl, add other ingredients, toss to combine, cover tightly and place in refrigerator overnight or until ready to use.

# CHOCOLATE CHIP COOKIES WITH HONEY ROASTED ALMONDS & CHILE

**Total Time:** 1 ¼ hours, plus chill time

**Yield:** 42 (2 -inch)

## Ingredients

### *For the Dough*

- 1 ¾ cups/225 grams all-purpose flour
- ¼ cup/30 grams whole-wheat flour
- ¾ tsp. baking soda
- ¼ tsp. baking powder
- ½ cup/115 grams unsalted softened butter
- 1 ⅔ cups/365 grams light brown sugar
- 1 tsp. fine sea salt
- ⅓ cup/80 grams unsalted creamy almond butter
- 1 large egg plus 1 large yolk
- 1 Tbsp. honey
- 1 cup/170 grams milk chocolate chips
- 1 cup/140 grams honey-roasted almonds, roughly chopped

### *For the Coating*

- ¼ cup/50 grams granulated sugar
- ¼ - ½ tsp. gochugaru (use more if you want a little more heat)
- ¼ tsp. ground cinnamon
- Flaky sea salt



## Instructions:

1. In a small bowl, whisk together both flours, baking soda and baking powder. Set aside.
2. Cream together butter, light brown sugar, and fine sea salt until light and fluffy, scraping the bowl as needed to ensure the butter is well incorporated.
3. Add the almond butter and beat for 1 minute until smooth, scraping the bowl as needed.
4. In a small bowl with a fork, whisk the egg and egg yolk to combine. With the mixer running on medium-low speed, stream the egg into the creamed butter until fully incorporated, followed by the honey. Stop and scrape, return to medium speed and beat for another minute.
5. Add the milk chocolate and almonds to the mixer and set to low speed just to combine. Turn off the mixer. Add the flour mixture from step 1, then blend on low just until incorporated.
6. Remove the bowl from the mixer and, using a spatula, fold the dough over in the bowl a few times.
7. On a parchment-lined baking sheet, scoop rounded tablespoons or 1-ounce scoops of cookie dough. (You'll finish shaping them later.) Chill the scooped dough in the fridge for 1 hour until firm.
8. When ready to bake, heat the oven to 350 degrees and arrange two racks in upper and lower middle positions. Line two baking sheets with parchment paper or silicone baking mats.
9. Prepare the coating: In a small bowl, stir together cane sugar, gochugaru and cinnamon.
10. Remove chilled dough from the fridge and form each ball into a 1-inch-thick puck, rounding the edges and flattening the top and bottom. Drop each puck in the sugar mix as you go, flipping until fully coated.
11. Place on the prepared baking sheets about 2 inches apart (about 15 cookies per sheet). Sprinkle each cookie with a pinch of flaky sea salt, crushing between your fingertips as you distribute it.
12. Bake the cookies for 8 minutes. After 8 minutes, rotate each sheet tray and lightly rap it to force the cookies to settle. (You should see craggy eruptions on the surface.) Bake the cookies for 2 to 3 more minutes, until the cookies are just golden at the edges but still slightly gooey in the center.
13. Remove the cookies from the oven and let them cool on the baking sheets for 1 minute. Using a spatula, transfer the cookies to a cooling rack to cool completely. Repeat with remaining dough.

# Check Out These Cookbooks!

These cookbooks all contain recipes with herbs from this month's kit. Did you know that we have over 350 cookbooks in our collection? Explore recipes from many different countries and cuisines!

## *Korean American: Food that Tastes like Home*

By Eric Kim

Location in library:  
641.595 KIM



## *Milk Street Simple*

By Christopher Kimball

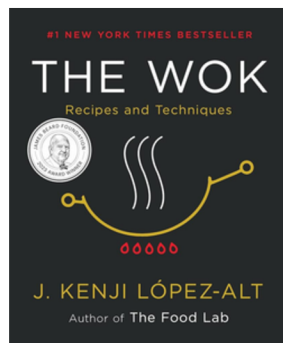
Location in Library:  
641.5 KIM



## *The Wok: Recipes and Techniques*

By J. Kenji López-Alt

Location in library:  
641.595 MUR



## *Maangchi's Big Book of Korean Cooking*

By Maangchi

Location in library:  
641.595



## *Ottolenghi Test Kitchen: Shelf Love*

By Noor Murad & Yottam Ottolenghi

Location in Library:  
641.595 MUR



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