

Chả Giò Vietnamese Eggrolls

BY CHRISTINE HA | @THEBLINDCOOK

Thanksgiving is my absolute favorite American holiday: no stressing about gifts—just the crisp autumn air, college football, and the bounty that is the Thanksgiving spread.

While my Thanksgiving table is typically an American Southern affair with Cajun fried turkey and broccoli rice casserole, there is often a little something lurking on the edge that leans Asian—my in-laws are Korean, so for most of my adult years, the Asian dish tends to be kim bap, japchae, or gochujang fried chicken. But growing up, my family's Thanksgiving table would be covered in Vietnamese food—pickled mustard greens, fried rice, a ramekin of fish sauce for dipping the turkey, and—if I'm lucky—chả giò, or Vietnamese eggrolls.

Chả giò, like Thanksgiving, are one of my favorite things in life, and nobody made them better than my mother. For many Vietnamese families living in America, this crispy finger food is a delicious and essential addition to the Asian+American holiday table, offering a mash-up of cultures and flavors right next to the turkey and stuffing.

Because prepping and cooking them were an entire day's affair, eggrolls were a rare treat during my childhood. They were reserved for special occasions, like family gatherings, Lunar New Year celebrations, and Thanksgiving. Because they are thought to resemble gold bullion in color and shape, the Vietnamese believe eating chả giò during festive times would usher in wealth and good fortune.

Sharing this tradition of cooking and eating lucky eggrolls with your friends and family, especially on a day dedicated to gratitude, makes the effort truly worthwhile. This recipe has been requested by many friends, and now here it is for your own culinary enjoyment—perfect for your next family gathering or holiday feast.

Chả Giò
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SERVES: 50 rolls

INGREDIENTS

½ onion, peeled and finely chopped
1 carrot, peeled and finely chopped
1 stalk scallion, finely chopped
2 cloves garlic, minced
2 oz wood ear mushrooms, reconstituted in hot water as needed and finely chopped
2 oz mung bean noodles; cooked al dente, drained, and finely chopped
¼ lb shrimp; peeled, deveined, and minced
½ lb ground pork
2 tbsp fish sauce or more to taste
1 egg
50 sheets spring roll wrappers or rice paper
Oil, for frying

INSTRUCTIONS

01 Make filling

Mix together onion, carrot, scallion, garlic, mushrooms, noodles, shrimp, pork, fish sauce, and egg. Season with pepper to taste. Cover and refrigerate for at least one hour or up to overnight.

02 Form rolls

Place 1 sheet of spring roll wrapper with a corner pointing away. Spoon 2–3 tbsp of filling on the lower ⅔ of the wrapper. Fold the bottom corner over the filling and push the filling to form a log. Fold in the right and left corners, brush the top corner with a cornstarch slurry, and roll up to seal. Repeat until all filling and skins are done.

03 Fry rolls

Heat oil in a heavy-bottomed pot to 350°F. Fry until golden and crisp; drain on wire racks lined with paper towels.

04 Serve

If desired, serve with lettuce leaves for wrapping and fish sauce vinaigrette for dipping. I personally prefer to eat mine straight from the cooling rack, simple and plain.