

RECIPES

Basil Chicken Stir-Fry

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Photograph By Travis Rainey, Food Styling By Mieko Takahashi

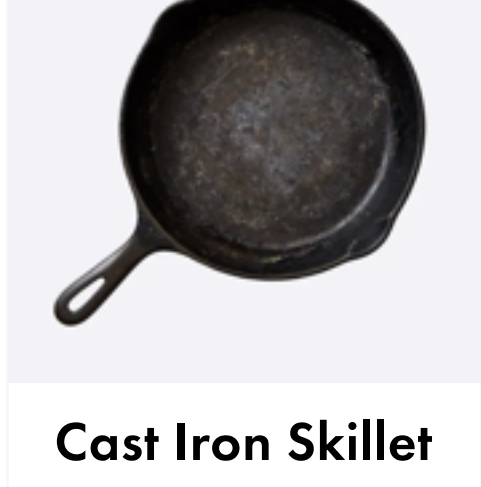
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Modeled after Thai pad kra pao, this simple, speedy chicken stir-fry is [wonderful for summer](#)—and beyond. Where the traditional version uses fresh chiles, this recipe replaces them with bottled [sambal oelek](#) to keep things pantry-friendly. Combined with oyster sauce, fish sauce, and a bit of sugar, it's a savory-spicy explosion of flavor that belies how quickly the dish comes together. Vigorously stirring the ground meat with a bit of liquid yields a bouncy texture, while the [baking soda](#) [contributes to a juicy end result](#). This two-pronged approach transforms a lean protein (that often tastes dry) into something springy and tender.

Sweet basil is an excellent substitute for the holy basil of the original; use the latter if you can find it. Outside of summer, swap in an equal quantity of baby spinach. Ground turkey or ground pork work well in place of the ground chicken.

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What you'll need



Cast Iron Skillet
[\\$30 AT AMAZON](#)



Wooden Spoon
[\\$7 AT AMAZON](#)

Recipe information

TOTAL TIME 25 minutes YIELD 4 servings

Ingredients

- 1 lb. ground chicken
- 4 Tbsp. vegetable oil, divided
- 1 tsp. Diamond Crystal or ½ tsp. Morton kosher salt, divided
- ½ tsp. baking soda
- ¼ cup oyster sauce
- 3 Tbsp. hot chili paste (such as sambal oelek)
- 1 Tbsp. fish sauce
- 2 tsp. light or dark brown sugar
- 3 large shallots, thinly sliced
- 6 oz. holy basil or sweet basil leaves
- Steamed rice and lime wedges (for serving)

Preparation

Step 1
Vigorously stir 1 lb. ground chicken, 1 Tbsp. vegetable oil, ½ tsp. Diamond Crystal or ¼ tsp. Morton kosher salt, ½ tsp. baking soda, and 2 Tbsp. water in a medium bowl until mixture is smooth and beginning to stick to sides of bowl; set chicken mixture aside.

Step 2
Stir ¼ cup oyster sauce, 3 Tbsp. hot chili paste (such as sambal oelek), 1 Tbsp. fish sauce, 2 tsp. light or dark brown sugar, and remaining ½ tsp. Diamond Crystal or ¼ tsp. Morton salt in a small bowl and set aside.

Step 3
Heat remaining 3 Tbsp. vegetable oil in a large cast-iron or nonstick skillet over medium-high. Cook 3 large shallots, thinly sliced, stirring occasionally with a wooden spoon or heatproof rubber spatula, until softened and golden in spots, about 4 minutes. Add reserved ground chicken mixture and spread into an even layer. Cook, undisturbed, until beginning to set, about 4 minutes. Break up meat with spoon into small pieces. Pour reserved oyster sauce mixture over and cook, stirring often, until most of the liquid is evaporated and sauce is clinging to meat.

Step 4
Add 6 oz. holy basil or sweet basil leaves to pan (it will seem like a lot) and let wilt slightly. Remove pan from heat and toss until basil is completely wilted.

Step 5
Serve stir-fry with steamed rice and lime wedges for squeezing over.

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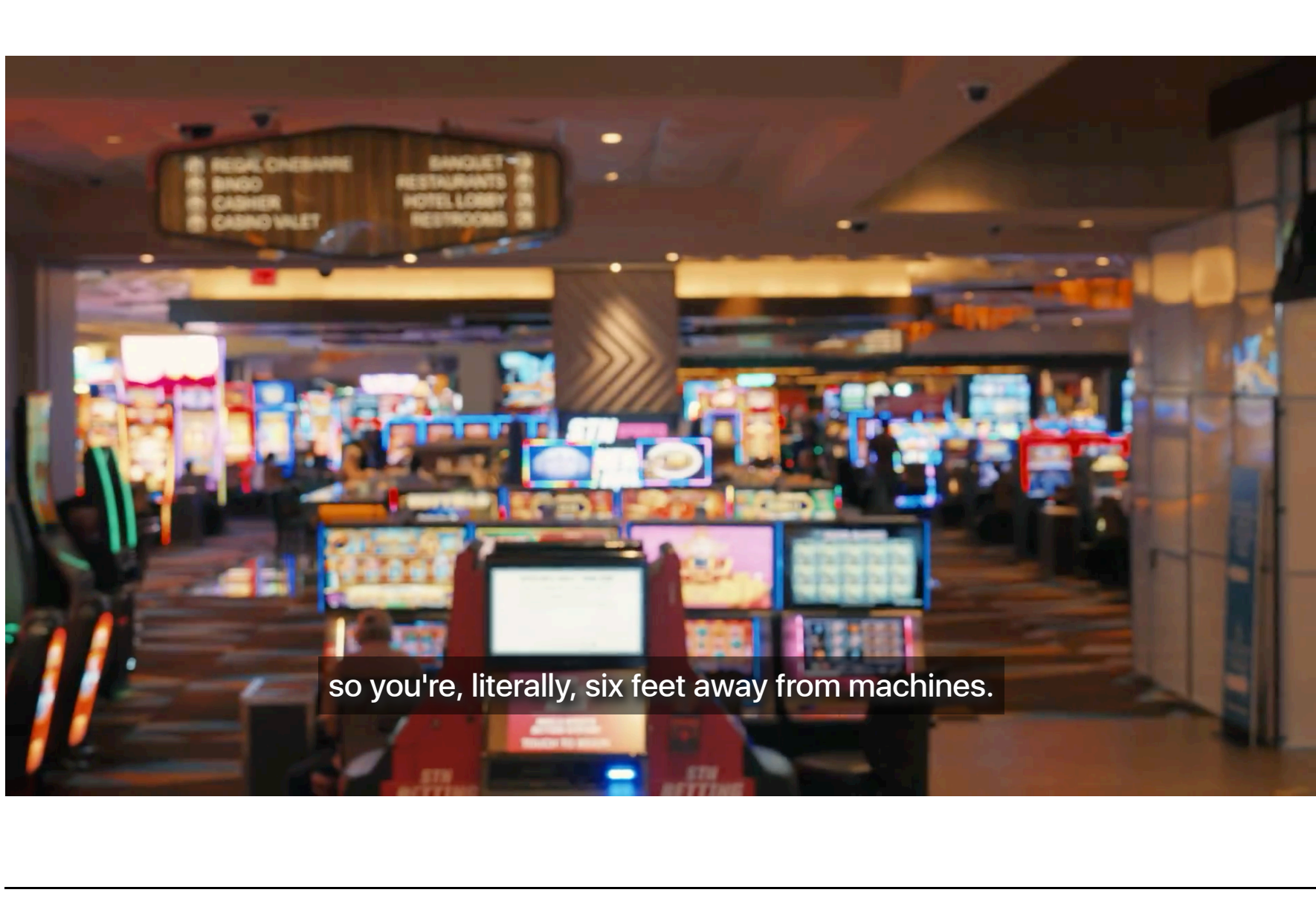
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