



Makes 20 buns
Preparation Time: 45 minutes
Cook Time: 1 hours 45 minutes

INGREDIENTS:

VEGAN BAO BUNS

- 1 tablespoon pure cane sugar
- 1¼ teaspoons active dry yeast
- 3 cups white whole wheat flour (360 grams), plus more for dusting
- 1 teaspoon baking powder
- 1 [bao bun filling](#) of your choice

SPICY SOY DIPPING SAUCE

- 1 tablespoon low-sodium soy sauce
- 1 tablespoon brown rice vinegar
- 1 tablespoon pure cane brown sugar
- 1 tablespoon sriracha sauce
- 1 teaspoon minced garlic

Hannah Che's Vegan Bao Buns

Soft steamed bread stuffed generously with a piping hot, flavorful medley of veggies—it doesn't get much better than bao. These popular Chinese buns are incredibly versatile in terms of their filling, which is why we've included three different savory options that will make you salivate. Stuff the fluffy whole wheat buns with a [Zucchini, Tofu, and Carrot Filling](#); a [Bok Choy and Shiitake Mushroom Filling](#); a [Five-Spice Kabocha Squash Filling](#); or do a mix-and-match of all three! While they're totally tasty on their own, you won't want to miss out on dipping these cute parcels in the homemade Spicy Soy Dipping Sauce. Feel free to make the bun dough a day ahead of time and let it rise in the refrigerator overnight. Multi-tier bamboo steamer baskets allow you to steam many buns at once, but you can use a metal steamer basket too.

Tip: You can freeze steamed buns in a single layer on a parchment-lined baking sheet; transfer to a freezer bag. Freeze up to 2 months. To reheat, steam 7 to 8 minutes or wrap buns in a damp paper towel and microwave on high 40 seconds.

For more vegan Chinese-inspired recipes, check out these tasty ideas:

- [Sweet and Sour Vegetable Soup](#)
- [Quick Brown Rice Congee](#)
- [Sweet Potato and Shiitake Mushroom Dumplings](#)
- Or check out our full collection of [vegan Chinese recipes](#)

By Hannah Che

- 1** In a large bowl combine sugar, yeast, and 1¼ cups warm water (105°F to 115°F); stir to dissolve. Let stand 5 to 10 minutes or until small bubbles appear on the surface. Add flour and baking powder; stir with a fork or pair of chopsticks until large flakes form. Using your hands, knead mixture vigorously until a smooth, elastic dough forms, about 15 minutes. Return dough to bowl; cover with a damp clean kitchen towel or plate, and let rise in a warm place for 60 to 90 minutes, until dough doubles in size,. Meanwhile, prepare desired filling.
- 2** On a clean, lightly floured surface, knead dough vigorously 5 minutes or until there are no air bubbles and dough is very smooth. Shape dough into a 1½-inch-thick log. Slice into 20 equal pieces (about the size of golf balls). Cut twenty 4-inch squares of parchment paper.
- 3** Lightly dust dough pieces with flour. Flatten each piece with your palm into a flat disk. Using a thin rolling pin, roll a disk into a circle about 3½ inches in diameter, thicker in the center and thinner at the edges. Dust with flour and transfer to a parchment square to prevent sticking. Set aside and cover with a clean kitchen towel to prevent drying. Repeat to make 20 disks.
- 4** Hold one disk in the palm of your nondominant hand, and place about 2½ tablespoons filling in the center, leaving a ¾-inch border. Using your dominant hand, pinch the edge of the disk

with your thumb and index finger to create a pleat, then extend your index finger to pinch another pleat to overlap with the first. Continue this process around the edge until the dough encloses the filling like a pouch, rotating it in your palm as you go. Pinch the top of the bun closed; set aside on a parchment square and cover with a kitchen towel. Repeat with the remaining dough disks and filling to form 20 buns.

- 5 Fill a large pot with 2 inches of water. Set a two-tier bamboo steamer basket inside the pot. (The water should not reach the bottom of the basket.) Bring water to boiling; place as many buns on parchment squares as will fit in the baskets, spacing 1½ inches apart. (Place remaining buns in the refrigerator while you work.) Cover basket. Steam buns over boiling water 8 minutes; turn off heat and let sit, covered, 5 minutes. Uncover and transfer to a plate or wire rack. Steam remaining buns, replenishing water in pot as necessary.
- 6 For Bao Dipping Sauce, in a small bowl stir together soy sauce, brown rice vinegar, brown sugar, and sriracha sauce. Stir in minced garlic until well combined.
- 7 Serve buns hot or at room temperature with Bao Dipping Sauce.