

*how to  
make*  
**chashu  
ramen**

*with*  
**Mamie  
Nishide**

BY DIANA ANDREWS  
& KIMBERLY Y. MASIBAY

RECIPE BY  
MAMIE NISHIDE



CALL RAMEN JAPAN'S SOUL FOOD. Thin wheat noodles in a rich broth imbued with meat, veggies, and toppings, it's a soul-satisfying meal in a bowl. Japan has almost as many types of ramen as it does sushi, making it one of the country's most popular foods. And judging by the recent proliferation of hip, upscale ramen joints in America, this savory noodle dish is now a favorite here, too.

Bitten by the ramen bug, our food editor/test kitchen manager, Diana Andrews, embarked on a quest to master the recipe. Under the tutelage of Japanese chef Mamie Nishide, owner

of the Japanese Cooking Studio in New York City, Andrews learned to make *chashu* ramen (recipe on p. 66), the rich pork-broth version that's topped with slices of salty-sweet, meltingly tender braised pork belly (aka *chashu*). Andrews's results were so transcendent—and so surprisingly accessible—that we knew we needed to share the secrets with you. "Once you try this recipe, you'll never go back," Nishide says, "and my students are always delighted to discover that the process is much easier than they expected."

Making the broth takes time, but it's an easy process that unfolds smoothly. You

can work on the dish over the course of two days, and once the elements come together—the flavorings in the broth and marinade, the noodles, and the toppings of succulent pork, marinated soft-cooked eggs, and sliced scallions—you'll discover that the resulting whole is vastly greater than the sum of its parts. As Andrews says, "It's satisfying on so many levels, and the return you get for your investment of time is worth every minute."

*Kimberly Y. Masibay is a contributing editor. Mamie Nishide is an instructor and caterer at Japanese Cooking Studio in New York City.*

# chashu ramen

The key to the success of this traditional ramen is the slow-cooked, intensely savory Japanese-style broth. Paired with the full-flavored braised pork belly, marinated eggs, and noodles, it makes a satisfying dish. **Serves 4**

## FOR THE PORK AND PORK BROTH

- 1 lb. pork belly, preferably skin on
- 4 cloves garlic, peeled and crushed
- 2 large scallions, trimmed and cut into 4 pieces each
- 1 1-inch piece (about ½ oz.) fresh ginger, peeled and cut into 4 slices

## FOR THE MARINADE

- 2 cups soy sauce
- ½ cup mirin
- ¼ cup granulated sugar
- ¼ cup honey
- 2 Tbs. white miso (shiro)

## FOR THE MARINATED EGGS

- 4 large eggs, at room temperature
- 1 cup reserved pork marinade

## FOR THE RAMEN BROTH

- Reserved pork broth
- 3 cups unsalted chicken stock
- 2 cups vegetable broth
- 8 cloves garlic, peeled and crushed
- 1 2½-inch piece fresh ginger, peeled and cut into 5 slices (2 oz.)
- Reserved pork marinade, to taste
- Kosher salt and freshly ground white pepper

## FOR SERVING

- 20 oz. fresh or frozen ramen noodles, or 14 oz. dried (see p. 88 and p. 96)
- Reserved pork marinade, to taste
- Reserved pork fat (optional)
- 4 medium scallions, trimmed and thinly sliced
- ¼ cup shinachiku (seasoned Chinese bamboo shoots; see p. 96; optional)
- 4 marinated eggs, halved
- 2 sheets roasted nori, cut into eight 1½x3-inch rectangles (see p. 96; optional)

## MAKE THE PORK AND PORK BROTH

Tie the pork at ½-inch intervals with kitchen twine. Put the pork in a large pot, cover with water, bring to a boil over medium-high heat, and cook for 15 minutes. Remove the pork, drain the water, and wipe the pot clean.

Return the pork to the pot. Add the garlic, scallions, ginger, and just enough water to

cover, about 6½ cups. Bring the mixture to a boil, reduce the heat to medium low, and cook partially covered, turning the pork halfway through, until the pork is fork-tender, 1½ to 2 hours. Let the pork cool in the broth.

Remove the pork and strain the broth through a cheesecloth-lined strainer into a large bowl; discard the vegetables. Cover the broth and refrigerate for at least 8 hours or up to 2 days.

## MARINATE THE PORK

In a large pot, combine the cooked pork, soy sauce, mirin, sugar, honey, miso, and just enough water to cover the pork, about 3½ cups. Bring to a boil, reduce the heat, and simmer, uncovered, for 1 hour, stirring and turning the pork occasionally. Let the pork cool in the marinade. When the pork is cool, remove it from the marinade, wrap it in plastic, and refrigerate for at least 8 hours or up to 2 days. Strain the marinade through a cheesecloth-lined strainer set over a medium bowl; discard the solids. Cover and refrigerate until ready to use. (You should have about 2½ cups.)

## MARINATE THE EGGS

Fill a medium saucepan two-thirds full with water and bring to a boil. Reduce the heat to maintain a gentle (not rolling) boil. Fill a medium bowl with ice water. Using a slotted spoon, gently lower the eggs into the pan and cook for 6 minutes. Transfer the eggs to the ice water and let cool completely. Peel the eggs and transfer to a zip-top bag, add the 1 cup reserved marinade, seal, and refrigerate for at least 8 hours or up to 2 days.

## MAKE THE RAMEN BROTH

Skim and reserve any fat from the pork broth, then pour it into a large pot. Add the chicken stock, vegetable broth, garlic, and ginger. Bring to a boil, reduce the heat, and simmer, uncovered, for 20 minutes, occasionally skimming off the foam. Strain the broth through a cheesecloth-lined strainer into a medium bowl; discard the solids. Add the reserved marinade to taste (¼ to ½ cup), then season to taste with salt and pepper. Cover and refrigerate until ready to use.

## SERVE THE RAMEN

Bring the pork and eggs to room temperature. Position a rack in the upper third of the oven and heat the broiler on high. Remove the twine from the pork, and transfer it to a foil-lined rimmed baking sheet. Broil, flipping once, until lightly charred on both sides, about 5 minutes total. Let the meat cool, then cut into bite-size pieces and set aside.

Meanwhile, bring the ramen broth to a boil in a large pot, remove from the heat, and cover to keep warm. Fill a large pot with water and bring to a boil. Add the ramen noodles and cook according to package directions until firm, yet chewy. Drain and set aside.

Put 1 to 2 Tbs. of the reserved marinade and 1 tsp. of the reserved pork fat, if desired, in each of 4 deep serving bowls. Ladle 1½ to 2 cups of ramen broth into each bowl.

Divide the ramen noodles among the bowls. Top each with the pork pieces (including some of the fat), scallions, and shinachiku, if using. Cut the eggs in half lengthwise and arrange yolk side up in bowls. If desired, arrange 2 nori strips in each bowl, standing them vertically against the edge. Add additional broth, if desired, and serve.

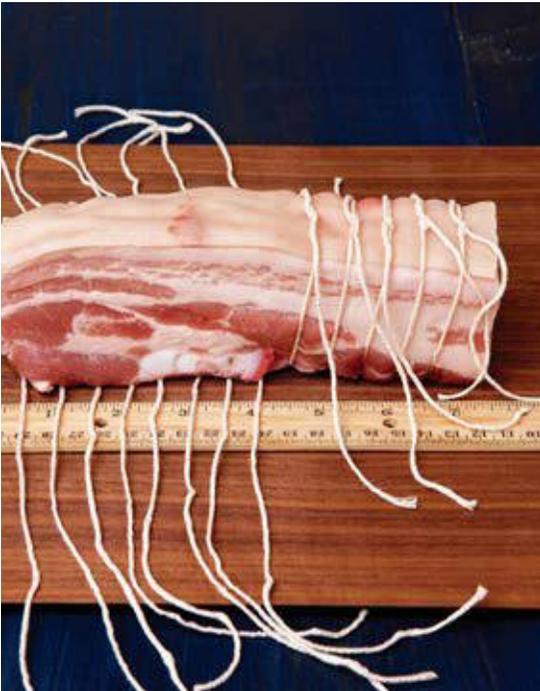
**NOTE:** Alternatively, you can serve the dish by arranging the pork, scallions, and shinachiku in separate piles on top of the ramen.

 **Pair With:** CHILLED SAKE This brew will play well with all the flavors in this dish—especially the salty-sweet pork—without being overpowered by any of them. Plus, its cool temperature will provide nice contrast to the warm broth.

## RAMEN RULES

- The pork belly becomes very tender during cooking. Tying it with kitchen twine before cooking will keep the meat together.
- Let the pork cool to room temperature in the broth and, again, in the marinade. This helps the meat stay moist and juicy, and allows it to absorb maximum flavor from the liquid.
- Pricking the wide end of an egg's shell with a pin or egg piercer (see p. 93) before boiling allows the cooked egg to have a smooth, round end. Some cooks also believe that piercing the shell helps prevent the white from sticking to the shell when you peel it.
- Peeling boiled eggs while they're submerged in cold water or under running cold water helps loosen the shell from the egg.
- Adding the reserved pork marinade to the ramen broth a bit at a time lets you decide how rich to make the broth.

# RAMEN STEPS FOR SUCCESS



Tie the pork belly with cut lengths of kitchen twine at ½-inch intervals.



After marinating, wrap the pork with plastic wrap, and refrigerate for at least 8 hours.



Transfer the peeled eggs to a zip-top bag, and add the marinade.



Strain the ramen broth through a cheesecloth-lined mesh strainer.



After broiling the pork, cut or break it into bite-size pieces.



Fill the bowls, then cut the marinated eggs in half lengthwise, and place on top.

## Make Ahead

- Most of the dish's components (the broths, eggs, and marinade) can be made up to two days ahead.
- Double the broths and marinade and freeze half to make another batch of ramen later.
- We used prepared noodles here, but if you'd like to make them from scratch, see p. 88.

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## TEST KITCHEN

### MISCELLANEOUS

## Ramen Primer

A guide to some of the more popular terms used to describe this favorite bowl of noodles.



#### Chashu ramen

Chashu is marinated and simmered pork that is served as a ramen topping. The pork is also sometimes offered as a side dish, garnished with green onions.

#### Dashi ramen

A soup stock used for making ramen that is commonly made with dried bonito flakes, niboshi (dried sardines), and kombu (dried seaweed) among other ingredients.

#### Hakata ramen

The broth for this ramen is made from pork bones that are cooked down until the stock is cloudy white in color. It's served with thin straight noodles.

#### Miso ramen

Ramen made with a miso (fermented soybean paste) flavored soup base.

#### Ramyun

This is the Korean version of ramen, often spicy, with curly, slightly wider noodles than found in its Japanese counterpart.

#### Shio ramen

Ramen made with a salt-flavored soup base. The broth is clear and light in color.

#### Shoyu ramen

Ramen made with a soy sauce-flavored soup base. The broth is clear and dark in color.

#### Tondaku ramen

Ramen made with a combination of tonkotsu (see below) and dashi soup bases. The dashi adds a seafood and fish essence to the flavor.

#### Tonkotsu

A soup base made from pork bones. This broth is thick and cloudy white in color. Some say that tonkotsu broth should be as creamy as milk.

#### Tsukemen

A type of ramen where the soup and noodles are served separately. The noodles are meant to be dipped into the soup and then slurped.