

Pho-riday Dinner Party

Looking for an easy, cozy winter meal for a dinner party or guests at home? Pho-get about stressing because Pho, Vietnamese soup made with herbs and spices, rice noodles, and typically chicken or beef, is your answer. You don't even have to be home to make the majority of this delicious meal because it's made in a slow cooker or Crockpot. On Pho-riday, we hosted some dear friends for dinner on a pretty snowy weekend in Chicago, and warmth was the name of the game. I've only made Pho once before, and I was worried I wouldn't be able to top the first time. This recipe is a keeper and easy to modify to taste.

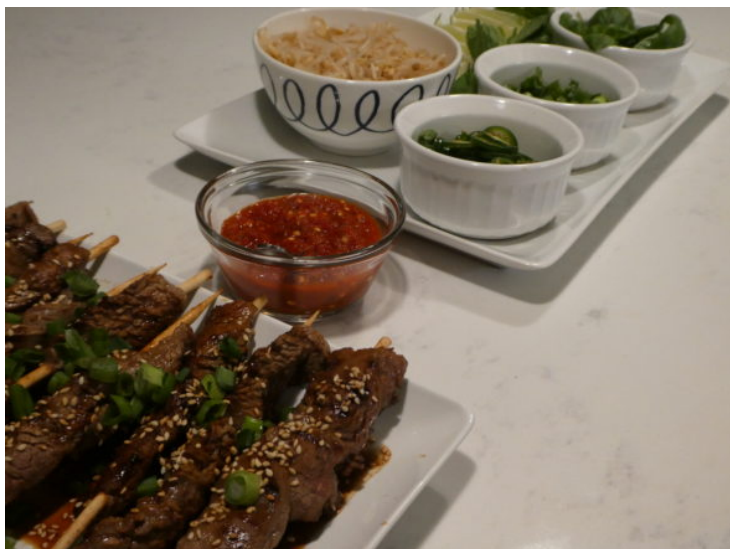


We modified this recipe by [Served from Scratch](#), that includes chicken broth, chicken breasts (we roasted a full chicken the evening before due to snowy weekend grocery inventory), star anise, a cinnamon stick, cloves, ginger, fish sauce, bok choy (or use kale if unavailable), rice noodles, and we added rehydrated porcini mushrooms. Turns out you can make this in quicker than 8 hours if you use store bought roasted chicken, or have your own on hand, which is helpful for a quick turnaround after work on a Friday night before guests arrive. Don't forget to toss the noodles in at the last minute so they retain their structure and they cook pretty quickly!



The key to the best bowl, is to let the star anise, cinnamon, ginger, cloves simmer for a few hours to really get the depth of floral flavors. Tip! Don't forget to put your spices in a sachet (or filter bag) so you can easily fish them out at the end. The other key to a great Pho bowl? The accoutrement, or toppings, of course! Serve it with bean sprouts, lime wedges, fresh basil and mint leaves, jalapeño, green onion, and your favorite chili sauce so guests can hand-craft their own dinner.

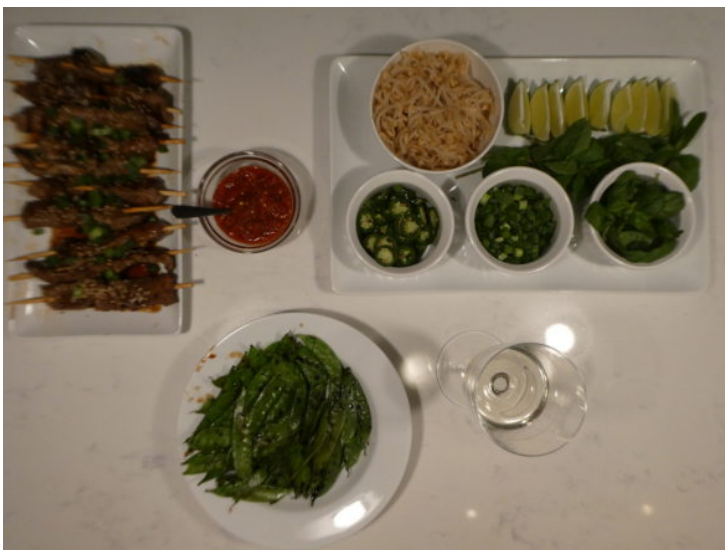
Serve it With...



If you're thinking a one-bowl dinner might not be enough for the crew, consider making these teriyaki beef skewers, made with just 8-hour-marinated teriyaki flank steak, thread them on wooden skewers soaked in water to prevent burn, sear them on a grill pan or outdoor grill for a few minutes on each side, and topped with sesame seeds and green onions. Tip! You can typically find wooden skewers near the meat or fish counter at the grocery store - just ask someone behind the counter.



Also not pictured was this delicious, fresh [Asian Cucumber Salad](#) by Dinner at the Zoo. Something about the cold and hydrating cucumbers, slightly sweet and tangy dressing is a refreshing complement to a slow simmered Pho bowl of warmth.



So Pho-get about those "what to make" blues, and get going on your own bowl of Pho soup!