

Vietnamese Egg Rolls (Chả giò).

FILLING

2 oz Cellophane noodles, -soaked in warm water for -20 minutes, then drained -and cut into 1-inch lengths
1 lb Ground pork
1 lg Onion, finely chopped
2 tb Tree ears, soaked in warm -water for 30 minutes, then -drained and finely chopped
3 Cloves garlic, finely -chopped
3 Shallots or white part of 3 -scallions, finely chopped
1 cn (7 ounces) crabmeat, -cartilage removed and meat -flaked with fingers
1/2 ts Freshly ground black pepper.

PREPARATIONS FOR ASSEMBLING

20 Sheets dried rice papers -(banh trang)
4 Eggs, well beaten
2 c Peanut oil

ACCOMPANIMENTS FOR SERVING

Basic Vegetable Platter
Carrot Salad
Double recipe of Nuoc Cham

Directions:

Combine the filling ingredients in a bowl and set aside. Cut a round rice paper sheet into quarters. Place the cut rice paper on a flat surface. With a pastry brush, paint the beaten egg over the entire surface of each of the pieces. Before filling, wait for the egg mixture to take effect, softening the wrappers; this takes about 2 minutes. When you become adept at this, you can work on several wrappers at a time.

When the wrapper looks soft and transparent, place about 1 teaspoon of filling near the curved side, in the shape of a rectangle. Fold the sides over to enclose the filling and continue to roll. After filling all the wrappers, pour the oil into a large frying pan, put the egg rolls into the cold oil, turn the heat to moderate, and fry for 20 to 30 minutes, until a lovely golden brown. (This is Bach's special method of keeping egg rolls crisp).

To serve the egg rolls, proceed as follows:

Arrange the ingredients for the vegetable platter (lettuce, mint leaves, coriander, and the cucumber slices) according to the directions preceding. Have ready the carrot salad and a bowl of nuoc cham. Each person has a bowl into which he places a bit of lettuce, 2 or 3 mint leaves, some coriander, and 2 cucumber slices. Each person then adds 1 or 2 egg rolls to his bowl, sprinkles with the nuoc cham, and eats the egg rolls and vegetables together, using chopsticks or a fork. Additional carrot salad may be added to taste.