

Tteokgalbi (Korean Beef Patties)

Ingredients

For the Tteokgalbi

- 1½ pounds ground beef, preferably 85% lean
- ¼ cup finely grated Asian pear, or 3 tablespoons Korean pear drink
- ¼ cup finely grated onion
- 2 green onions, finely chopped
- 1½ tablespoons brown sugar, or 1 tablespoon if using Korean pear drink
- 1 tablespoon honey
- 1 tablespoon mirin
- 1 tablespoon toasted sesame oil
- 4 cloves garlic, minced
- 3 tablespoons soy sauce
- ½ teaspoon finely grated fresh ginger
- ¼ teaspoon ground black pepper
- 1 tablespoon neutral cooking oil, for the pan

For Garnish

- 2 tablespoons pine nuts, finely crushed, optional
- Thinly sliced green onion, optional

Instructions

1. In a large bowl, combine the Asian pear, onion, green onion, garlic, soy sauce, brown sugar, honey, mirin, sesame oil, ginger, and black pepper. If using Korean pear drink, use the reduced amount of brown sugar.
2. Add the ground beef and mix thoroughly for about 2 to 3 minutes, until the seasoning is evenly distributed and the meat becomes slightly sticky.
3. Divide the mixture into 6 equal portions. Shape into round or slightly oval patties and press a shallow indentation into the center of each.
4. Refrigerate the patties for 20 to 30 minutes to help them hold their shape while cooking.
5. Heat the neutral oil in a large skillet over medium heat. Add the patties without overcrowding the pan and cook for about 4 to 5 minutes, until the bottoms are browned and caramelized.
6. Flip and cook for another 4 to 5 minutes, lowering the heat if they begin to darken too quickly. Cook until the centers reach 160°F.
7. Transfer the patties to a plate and let them rest for 3 to 5 minutes.
8. Sprinkle lightly with finely crushed pine nuts and sliced green onion, if using. Serve warm.

Note & Storage

- Use 85% lean ground beef for a good balance of flavor and moisture.
- Mix the beef until slightly sticky so the patties hold together without breadcrumbs or another binder.
- Chilling the shaped patties helps them stay together during cooking.
- Cook over medium heat so the sweet seasoning can caramelize without burning.
- Store cooled tteokgalbi in an airtight container in the refrigerator for up to 3 days.
- Reheat gently in a covered skillet over low heat or in the microwave until heated through.
- Freeze cooked patties for up to 2 months, placing parchment paper between layers. Thaw overnight in the refrigerator before reheating.