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MAKES 2 CUPS (170 G)

# Pork Floss

豬肉鬆

Zhū Ròu Sōng

豬肉酥

Ti Bah Soo

Before the advent of refrigeration, making pork floss was just a way to elongate the shelf life of meat. It's dehydrated pork flavored with soy sauce, sugar, and five-spice powder, shredded so finely that it's reminiscent of a clump of hair. These days, pork floss can be purchased at most Asian specialty stores, which is what I recommend doing, because making it at home can be quite time-consuming. However, the steps are well worth it if you have a craving and don't have access to a store that sells it, or just want to take on a fun challenge.

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| 1 pound (450 g) pork tenderloin                        | 1 tablespoon Taiwanese rice wine (michiu) or cooking sake |
| 1 scallion, tied in a knot                             | ½ teaspoon fine sea salt                                  |
| 1 ½-inch piece fresh ginger (5 g), unpeeled and sliced | ⅛ teaspoon ground white pepper                            |
| 2 tablespoons white sugar                              | ⅛ teaspoon five-spice powder                              |
| 1 tablespoon soy sauce                                 | ⅛ teaspoon ground cinnamon                                |
|  | 2 teaspoons lard or sesame oil                            |

Slice the pork along the grain into long strips, about 1 inch (2.5 cm) thick. Cut the strips crosswise against the grain so that each strip measures about 2 inches (5 cm) long.

In a small pot set over high heat, add the sliced pork tenderloin and enough water to cover. Bring to a boil, then reduce the heat to medium and briskly simmer for 5 minutes. Turn off the heat. Drain in a colander set in the sink and rinse quickly under running water to get rid of the excess scum.

In a small pot, bring 1¼ cups (300 ml) water to a rolling boil. Add the pork tenderloin, scallion, ginger, sugar, soy sauce, rice wine, salt, white pepper, five-spice powder, and cinnamon and bring everything to a boil. The liquid should just barely cover the pork. Cover, reduce the heat to low, and slowly simmer with the lid slightly ajar until the pork is soft and the liquid reduces to half, 1½ to 2 hours. As the liquid starts to reduce, rotate the pork pieces occasionally with chopsticks. Turn off the heat.

Preheat the oven to 225°F (110°C).

When the pork is cool enough to handle but still warm, remove it from the pot and shred it with your hands or a fork. Reserve the braising liquid. When all the pork has been shredded, transfer it to the bowl of a stand mixer, pour in the braising liquid, and mix with the paddle attachment on medium speed

**SPECIAL EQUIPMENT:**  
stand mixer with the paddle attachment

until the liquid is mostly absorbed and the pork breaks apart completely and looks like pulled pork, about 2 minutes.

Transfer the mixture to a parchment paper-lined sheet pan and spread it out in a single even layer. Bake for 15 minutes, until the pork is slightly dried out. Transfer to the stand mixer and mix again with the paddle attachment on medium speed until the pieces break up even more finely, about 2 minutes. Repeat this process 4 to 5 more times, baking in 15-minute increments and then mixing with the paddle attachment for 2 minutes until the pork is completely dried out and fluffy with the texture of clumped-up floss. The final color will be reminiscent of cardboard. The total baking time will range between 1¼ and 1½ hours. After the final bake, remove the sheet pan from the oven and, while the pork floss is still hot, mix in the lard. Cool the pork floss down completely to room temperature before use. To store, transfer to an airtight jar. Pork floss can be stored at room temperature for 1 month or in the refrigerator for 3 months.

