

This tender cut of beef cooks quickly and tastes great. You can vary the recipe by substituting chicken or using vegetables you have on hand.

Ginger Beef Stir-Fry

1 teaspoon cornstarch
¼ cup cold water
¼ cup plum sauce
1 tablespoon grated fresh gingerroot

Sauce for stir-fry

The plum sauce called for in the Ginger Beef Stir-Fry is a thick sweet-and-sour condiment made from plums, apricots, sugar and seasonings. It's often served with duck, pork, or ribs. Sometimes labeled "duck sauce," it is usually found near Oriental products in the grocery store.

1 tablespoon soy sauce
¼ teaspoon crushed red pepper flakes
1 pound boneless beef sirloin steak, cut into thin 2-inch strips
1 to 2 tablespoons vegetable oil
1 medium sweet red pepper, julienned
1-½ cups fresh broccoli florets
2 medium carrots, thinly sliced
4 green onions, chopped
1 teaspoon minced garlic
3 tablespoons salted peanuts, chopped
Hot cooked rice (optional)
2 tablespoons sesame seeds, toasted

In a small bowl, whisk cornstarch and cold water until smooth. Stir in the plum sauce, ginger, soy sauce, and pepper flakes; set aside. In a large skillet or wok, stir-fry beef in oil until no longer pink; remove and keep warm.

In the same pan, stir-fry the vegetables and garlic until tender. Return beef to the pan. Whisk the plum sauce mixture; stir into skillet. Cook and stir until slightly thickened. Stir in peanuts. Serve over rice if desired. Sprinkle with sesame seeds. Makes 4 servings.