The catch: Chinese noodles continue to enjoy promin restaurants and are much loved by food lovers the wo

A steaming bowl of hand-pulled noodles or noodles in soup?

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BY KADUMUKASA KIRONDE



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Weekend Cuisine

In China, noodles in soup are by far more popular than fried noodles. This is a basic recipe that you can adapt and tweak by using different ingredients as you may see fit. Chinese noodles have long been a staple of the country's culinary history and their origins can be traced back thousands of years, and over time they have evolved to become a beloved and important dish in Chinese cuisine. Nowadays, the Ugandan housewife no longer has to traipse with the family to some fancy and expensive Chinese joint in Kampala to enjoy a warm bowl of noodles in different flavors.

Fortunately, all the requirements are readily available in Kampala, and with enough time and proper planning, you will dazzle friends and family with this fabulous noodles in soup item right in your home. Let's begin by exploring the fascinating history of Chinese noodles, from their ancient beginnings to their current status as a worldwide favourite.

The origins of Chinese noodles can be traced back to the Han Dynasty (206 BCE - 220 CE). Early records indicate that noodles were made by kneading dough and then cutting or pulling it into long, thin strips.

Some historians even believe noodles could have existed as early as the Qin Dynasty (221-207 BCE) or the Zhou Dynasty (1046-256 BCE). However, the precise timeline remains a topic of debate among scholars. The Silk Road, an ancient network of trade routes that connected China to the Mediterranean world, played a significant role in the spread of Chinese noodles.

As traders, merchants, and travelers journeyed along these routes, they brought Chinese noodles to Central Asia, Persia, and Italy. This cultural exchange allowed for the development of various noodle dishes in different regions, giving rise to pasta in Italy and various noodle dishes across Asia. Over the centuries, Chinese noodles have evolved into various shapes, sizes, and textures. Some of the most popular and better known types of noodles in Chinese cuisine include:

Wheat noodles: Made from wheat flour, these noodles can be found in various thicknesses and shapes, such as thin strands or flat, wide ribbons. Examples include Lamian, Daoxiao, and Lanzhou-style noodles.

Rice noodles: Made from rice flour, these noodles are famous in southern China and Southeast Asia. They are typically thin, translucent, and have a delicate texture. Examples include Guilin-style and Yunnan-style rice noodles. Egg noodles: Prepared with wheat flour and eggs, these noodles have a distinct yellow color and a slightly chewy texture. They are commonly used in dishes like chow mein and lo mein.

Traditional Chinese noodle making is considered an art form, with skilled noodle chefs pulling and stretching the dough by hand to create incredibly thin and long strands. The process, known as "Lamian" or "hand-pulled noodles," requires years of practice and expert technique. In addition to hand-pulled noodles, other methods of making noodles include cutting, extruding, and rolling.

Chinese noodles have made their way into the culinary traditions of many countries. Dishes such as Japanese ramen, Korean jjajangmyeon, and Vietnamese pho have their roots in Chinese noodle cuisine. Additionally, the influence of Chinese immigrants in the United States during the California gold rush led to the creation of American-Chinese dishes like chow mein and Chop suey, further showcasing the versatility and adaptability of Chinese noodles.

The rich history of Chinese noodles is a testament to their enduring popularity and cultural significance. From their ancient origins to their influence on global cuisine, Chinese noodles continue to enjoy prominence in Asian restaurants and are much loved by food lovers the world over.

Whether you are enjoying a steaming bowl of hand-pulled noodles, noodles in soup or a plate of fragrant stir-fried you're partaking in a culi dition that spans thou years.

Titbits
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Noodles in Soup
INGREDIENTS:

- Serves 4
- 225g of chicken o though the Chin be inclined to u Marinate the me en in a bit of m lic and ginger t with a bit of oil.
- 3 – 4 dried Chi rooms, soaked
- 120g can slic shoots, drained
- 120g spinach l hearts or Chine
- 2 spring onion
- 400g dried egg
- 600 ml/3 cups
- 2 tablespoons
- Salt and pepp
- ½ teaspoon li ar (optional)
- 1 tablespoon sauce

