

# MELISSA KING

## TV PERSONALITY | SOCIAL ADVOCATE

Melissa King is an accomplished chef, advocate, and entrepreneur. King is a judge on *Top Chef: Season 18*, was the *Top Chef: All-Stars Season 17* winner, and has won the most challenges in the show's history. Known for her blend of California cuisine with Asian flavors, King was recognized as one of the best female chefs in San Francisco and a 40 Under 40 Rising Star.

With over 15 years in the industry, she's helmed Michelin-starred kitchens under names such as Dominique Crenn and Ron Siegel. King leads virtual cooking classes, creates small-batch sauces, and designs unique ice cream flavors with Humphry Slocombe.

King is a proud Chinese-American using her platform to advocate. Through her *Top Chef* Fan-Favorite award and proceeds from classes, King raised over \$20K benefiting The Trevor Project, The Okra Project, Asian Youth Center, and more. She's featured in GAP's 2021 spring campaign celebrating diversity. Visit [ChefMelissaKing.com](http://ChefMelissaKing.com).

## KUNG PAO CHICKEN

1 pound boneless, skinless chicken thighs, cut into 1-inch cubes  
1 tablespoon toasted sesame oil  
1 small yellow onion, diced into ¾-inch pieces  
5 garlic cloves, finely minced  
1 tablespoon finely minced or grated ginger  
1 red, orange, or yellow bell pepper, diced into ¾-inch pieces  
1 celery stalk, cut into ½-inch pieces  
2 tablespoons roasted unsalted peanuts, roughly chopped  
7 to 8 dried, whole Tianjin or other Chinese chiles, cut or torn in half  
¼ teaspoon whole Sichuan peppercorns  
1 tablespoon canola or other neutral oil  
2 scallions, cut into 1-inch batons  
Steamed rice, cauliflower rice, or quinoa

### FOR THE CHICKEN MARINADE

1 tablespoon soy sauce  
1 teaspoon toasted sesame oil  
2 teaspoons Chinese Shaoxing rice wine  
½ teaspoon sugar  
½ teaspoon cornstarch  
⅛ teaspoon ground white or black pepper

### FOR THE KUNG PAO SAUCE

2 tablespoons Chinese Shaoxing rice wine  
2 teaspoons sugar  
⅛ teaspoon ground white or black pepper  
1 tablespoon hoisin sauce  
1 tablespoon dark soy sauce, optional  
2 tablespoons Chinese Chinkiang black vinegar (can substitute balsamic vinegar)

Add the chicken marinade ingredients to a medium bowl and mix to combine. Add the chicken and stir to coat. Set aside to marinate.

In a hot wok or pan over high heat, add sesame oil followed by onions, garlic, and ginger. Cook, stirring occasionally, until lightly colored and fragrant, about 1 minute. Add the peppers and celery and cook for an additional minute. Add peanuts, dried chiles, and peppercorns and cook until fragrant, about 1 minute. Transfer the vegetable and spice mixture to a large bowl and return the empty pan to high heat.

Add canola oil to the hot wok or pan and sauté chicken until seared on all sides and cooked through, 3 to 5 minutes. Return the vegetable-and-spice mixture back to the pan and add the kung pao sauce ingredients. Cook, stirring occasionally, until the sauce thickens, 2 to 3 minutes. Fold in the scallions and remove from heat. Serve immediately over steamed rice.

Makes 2 to 3 servings