

Bacon and Vegetables in Miso Soup

Swick

Serves 1 | Active Time: 30 minutes | Total Time: 1 hour

Chef's Notes

- The bonito flakes used in this recipe are shredded. If the bonito flakes that you're using are in larger pieces, use 2 cups. Kezuri bushi is Japanese for dried bonito.
- To make niban dashi, pour another liter of water into the pan and return kombu and bonito flakes used in making the first stock. Bring to a boil, then reduce the heat to lower and simmer for 15 minutes. Add another cup of bonito flakes and simmer for another 5 minutes. Remove from the heat and wait for 5 minutes. Strain the liquid through a sieve and use as required.

^Do not allow the miso soup to boil as it spoils the miso aroma.

Substitute or add other vegetables that are in season in your area.

Step 1: Making the Ichiban dashi (first stock)

- 1 2x4 inch piece of kombu (kelp)
- 1 cup of bonito flakes*
- 1 liter room temperature water

To make the dashi stock, wipe the kombu with clean cloth. Put water in a soup pot. Add the kombu and soak for 20 minutes. Then, heat the pot on medium heat and remove the kombu just before the water boils. Turn off the heat.

Add the bonito flakes into the kombu-infused water. Let the stock stand for 3-5 minutes, depending on the thickness and dryness of the flakes. Line the sieve with a cheesecloth. Strain the stock through the cheesecloth into a clean pot.

Reserve the kombu and bonito flakes to make a niban dashi (second stock)**

Step 2: Preparing the mise-en-place

- 4 ounces unsmoked or lightly smoked bacon
- 1/2 carrot
- 1/4 stalk celery
- 3 ounces atsugae (deep fried tofu)
- 1/4 zucchini
- 10 pencil asparagus or (5 thick)

To start your mise-en-place, trim some of excess fat around the bacon and cut into 1/4 inch thick strips. Peel and cut the carrot and celery into medium dice.

Next, cut the atsugae into 1/4 inch thick slice. Then, cut each slice into half lengthwise and into squares crosswise.

Cut the zucchini into quarters. Cut off the seeds and then into medium dice.

Snap off the end of asparagus and cut into 1/2 inch piece

You should have about 1/3 cup of each vegetable.

Step 3: Cooking the soup

- 1 tsp canola oil

To start the soup, heat a little bit of oil in the soup pot, add the bacon and render the fat. Cook the bacon until brown but not crispy. Drain some of the excess oil from the pot.

Then, add the carrots and celery. Cook for another two minutes. Next, add the strained dashi stock and the atsugae. Bring to a simmer, cook for 8-10 minutes until the bacon and vegetables are soft but not mushy.

Next add the zucchini and cook until al dente about less than 2 minutes. Then, add the asparagus and cook just until crunchy about less than a minute.

Step 4: Finishing the soup

- 1 green onion
- 2-3 tbsp shiro miso (or other miso paste)

To finish the soup, chop the green onion.

Then, dissolve the miso paste with some dashi stock from the pot. Whisk until paste is dissolved. Add to the soup pot and simmer^ for another minute.

Sprinkle over green onions and serve the soup hot.