

Shiitake Dashi (All-Purpose Soup Stock)

This simple stock is great for soups; stews; sauces and gravies; noodle broths; and dips for tempura, fried mochi, and fried tofu. Dashi will keep for one week in the refrigerator.

In a pot, soak kombu and shiitake in water for 15 minutes*. Remove shiitake, cut off and discard stems, and thinly slice caps. Return mushroom caps to the water, and bring to a simmer over medium heat. Simmer 5 minutes, then remove kombu and reserve it for another use. Simmer shiitake 10-15 minutes more. If not using the shiitake in the dish, remove it and reserve it for another use.

*If you intend to use the shiitake in the dish, they will be more tender if you soak them for several hours or overnight. Add the kombu for the last 15 minutes of soaking.

Preparation List:

Makes approximately 6 cups

- 6-inch piece kombu
- 3-4 dried shiitake
- 7 cups spring water

Shiitake Soup and Noodle Broth

For soups, add your favourite vegetables or other ingredients to Shiitake Dashi, simmer until tender, and season with a little salt and Shoyu or Tamari and Mirin to taste (about 1 tablespoon of each). If desired, add a little fresh ginger juice.

Broth for Soba or Udon is made the same way, except that more Shoyu or Tamari is added (about 1 tablespoon for every 2 cups of broth). Increase the Mirin, if desired, and season with ginger or wasabi. Ladle the hot broth over bowls of cooked soba or udon and garnish with minced green onions.