RECIPE

Kabocha and tofu miso soup with brown rice

A kabocha, shiitake and tofu miso soup in a kombu broth with wakame and spinach, served with brown rice for a lunch; Okinawa-style pattern, about 555 mg sodium a serving.

MAKES

4 servings US Metric

TOTAL

1 h

Ingredients

- [ ] 600 g kabocha squash (about 1⅓ lb), seeds scooped out, skin left on, cut in 1-inch chunks
- [ ] 1 piece dried kombu (4 inches square, about 5 g), lifted out after the soak, counted whole
- [ ] 4 oz fresh shiitake caps, stems removed, sliced
- [ ] 2 tsp fresh ginger, finely grated
- [ ] 250 g firm tofu, cut in ¾-inch cubes (about 2 cups)
- [ ] 2 cups loosely packed baby spinach
- [ ] 4 medium scallions, thinly sliced
- [ ] 4 tsp dried wakame (about 3 g dry, 20 g once soaked)
- [ ] 3 tbsp white miso paste

Method

1. Put the kombu in a pot with the 6 cups of cold water and leave it 30 minutes. Do not boil it with the kombu in: lift the kombu out when the water first shows small bubbles at the edge, about 140 °F (our kitchen practice; we hold no published source for it yet).

2. Add the kabocha, shiitake and ginger. Bring to a boil, then keep it at a gentle simmer with the lid cracked for 12 to 15 minutes, until a fork slides into a chunk of kabocha but the chunk still holds its shape. At 5,300 ft the squash can take longer: go by the fork, not the clock.

3. Put the dried wakame in a small bowl of cold water for 5 minutes, then drain it.

- [ ] 2 cups cooked brown rice, cooked without salt, for serving
- [ ] 6 cups water

4. Turn the heat to low. Add the tofu, the drained wakame and the spinach, and heat 2 minutes, until the spinach has wilted and the tofu is hot through.

5. Take the pot off the heat. Ladle about 1 cup of the hot broth into a bowl, whisk the 3 tbsp miso into it until smooth, then pour it back into the pot and stir once. Do not boil the soup again after the miso goes in.

6. Stir in the scallions. Serve in four bowls, each with ½ cup of the cooked brown rice beside it. Eat the soup first and the rice after.

7. Cool leftovers within 2 hours (1 hour above 90 °F), then refrigerate. Reheat to a boil, stirring, or to 165 °F; the miso goes cloudy but is fine.