

Warm Daikon Salad



Daikon, so crispy when raw, becomes comfort food when cooked. Kombu is a thick dark-green seaweed, sold dried, and because of its saltiness and umami, is a common component of Japanese stocks. Other items to pick up at the Japanese shop: daikon radish sprouts, which have some of the peppery bite of the vegetable; mirin, a rice wine that's sweeter than sake and used for cooking; and finally, yuzu, a very special citrus fruit slowly gaining in popularity in North America. This last item, however, will probably be hard to find, so just use lemon juice instead.

Serves 6 as a side dish

Ingredients

- 1 large daikon radish (about 2 pounds/900 g)
- 1 piece of kombu (dried kelp), 3 1/2 inches (9 cm) square
- 2 to 3 green onions, thinly sliced, for garnish
- Daikon radish sprouts, for garnish (optional)
- Splash of fresh lemon juice or yuzu juice (if you can find it)

Dressing

- 2/3 cup (160 mL) miso paste
- 3 tablespoons (45 mL) sake
- 2 tablespoons (30 mL) mirin (Japanese cooking wine)
- 1 tablespoon (15 mL) granulated sugar, plus more as needed
- Splash of dashi stock, plus more as needed
- 1 large egg yolk

Directions

1. Peel the daikon and cut into 3/4- to 1-inch (2 to 2.5 cm) rounds. If you don't have a flat lid that's slightly smaller than the diameter of your medium saucepan, cut out a circle using parchment paper,

- and cut out a small air vent. Place the daikon in the medium saucepan, and add the kombu and water to cover. Bring to a simmer over medium heat. Cover with the small flat lid or parchment paper directly on top of the daikon. Cook until the daikon becomes slightly translucent, about 30 minutes.
2. While the daikon cooks, make the dressing. Bring a medium saucepan filled with water to a boil, then reduce to just a simmer over medium-low. In a stainless-steel bowl that fits over the pot, soften the miso by gradually mixing in the sake and mirin. Add the sugar and a splash of dashi stock, and whisk in the egg yolk. Cook, whisking constantly, until slightly thick, about 2 minutes. Taste and add more sugar if needed. If the sauce becomes too thick, whisk in a little dashi stock.
 3. Using a slotted spoon, transfer daikon pieces to individual plates. Drizzle with the dressing. Garnish with the green onions, and daikon sprouts, if using. Drizzle with a splash of lemon juice (or yuzu juice) just before serving.