

Alton Brown's Dashi and Miso Shiru

Dashi

2 (4-inch) square pieces kombu
2 1/2 quarts water
1/2 -ounce bonito flakes or katsuobushi, about 2 cups

Put the kombu in a 4-quart saucepan, cover with the water and soak for 30 minutes.

Set the saucepan over medium heat until the water reaches 150 to 160 degrees F and small bubbles appear around the sides of the pan, 9 to 10 minutes.

Remove the kombu from the pan. Increase the heat to high and bring to a boil, 5 to 6 minutes. Reduce the heat to low and add the bonito flakes.

Simmer gently, stirring frequently, for 10 minutes.

Strain the liquid through a fine mesh strainer lined with muslin or several layers of cheesecloth. Discard bonito flakes. Store in an airtight container.

Makes about 2 quarts.

Miso Shiru

12 -ounce block firm silken tofu
2 quarts dashi
6 tablespoons dark or red miso
2 tablespoons light or white miso
4 scallions, thinly sliced

Wrap the block of tofu in 2 layers of paper towels and lay on a plate. Invert a second plate on top of the tofu and weigh down with a 28-ounce can.

Leave for 20 minutes then cut the tofu into 1/4 to 1/2-inch cubes.

Heat the dashi in a 4-quart saucepan over medium-high heat. When the dashi reaches 100 degrees F on an instant-read thermometer, ladle 1 cup into a small bowl. Add the miso and whisk until smooth.

Bring the remaining dashi to a bare simmer, approximately 10 minutes. Add the miso mixture and whisk to combine. Return to a slight simmer, being careful not to boil the mixture. Add the tofu and scallions and cook for another minute or until heated through. Remove from the heat, ladle into soup bowls and serve immediately.