

## Chilled Soba with Shoyu Mirin Dipping Sauce and Garnishes

**Time:** 30 minutes.

We serve these soba at room temperature in a chilled sauce that starts with dashi—a broth flavored with katsuobushi (dried bonito tuna flakes) and kombu (dried kelp) that's used in much Japanese cookery. We cool the dashi and add sparkling liquid aromatics—shoyu (Japanese soy sauce), mirin (rice wine), and a few drops of citrusy yuzu vinegar. (These Japanese ingredients are available in specialty markets and online.) But soba are miraculously versatile at any time of year. We like them just as well in the winter, served in a hot dashi bath with roasted shiitakes.

### Equipment Mise en Place

For the sauce you will need a small saucepan, a pair of tongs, and a fine, conical sieve.

### Ingredients

1 recipe Soba

For the sauce: 1 (6-inch) frond kombu (dried kelp)

1/2 cup packed katsuobushi (dried bonito tuna flakes, preferably wide-shaved)

2 cups spring or filtered water

1 tablespoon Japanese soy sauce

1 tablespoon mirin

1/2 teaspoon yuzu vinegar (optional)

For the garnishes:

1 tablespoon sesame seeds, toasted in a dry pan over low heat until golden

1 sheet nori (dried seaweed), cut into quarters with scissors and toasted in a hot, dry pan for a few seconds per side, then sliced or crumbled

1 small piece daikon radish, peeled and coarsely grated

1 scallion, white and green part, thinly sliced

1 tablespoon wasabi, stirred into a paste, according to directions on packaging (optional)

### Directions

**1.** To make the sauce: Wipe the kombu with a damp paper towel. Place it in a small saucepan, with the water, over low heat. Bring up the heat slowly, but do not allow the kombu to boil. When the kombu has risen to the surface of the pan, transfer it to a small bowl, using tongs. Set aside. (The kombu can be reused for a subsequent brewing

### Cooking Remarks

Traditionally, soba are served unadorned in individual bowls—or iced on bamboo mats—with their sauce and garnishes passed separately. We prefer a more casual ice cream sundae approach.

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of dashi.) Increase the heat to medium-high. Stir in the bonito flakes just as the liquid is about to boil. As soon as it does boil, turn the heat down to low and cook very gently, without boiling, for 5 minutes.

**2.** Strain the liquid through a fine conical sieve into a small bowl or heatproof glass measuring cup. There will be about 3/4 cup. Stir the soy sauce, mirin, and vinegar, if using, into the hot liquid. Cover and refrigerate until ready to serve.

**3.** To serve: Portion the noodles into individual bowls and pass the sauce and garnishes separately. Or garnish and dress the noodles in their individual bowls—it's much less complicated.

**Serves 4 as an appetizer**