

CLASSICI KOREAN SEAWEED SOUP

INGREDIENTS:

- 1 ounce (about 1/3 cup) dried seaweed, such as precut wakame.
- 1 tablespoon sesame oil.
- 2 cloves garlic, peeled and minced.
- 3 ½ cups anchovy, bone, or vegetable stock.
- 1 ½ tablespoons soy sauce, or to taste.
- 2 tablespoons brown sesame seeds (optional)
- A pinch of pepper (optional)

DIRECTIONS:

1. Soak seaweed in water for 10 to 20 minutes, or until rehydrated. Seaweed will expand to more than 3 times its size. Drain and squeeze to remove excess water.
2. In medium-size pot, heat oil over medium heat, add garlic and cook until fragrant (30 seconds).
3. Add seaweed and sauté for another 2 minutes.
4. Add the stock and soy sauce and raise heat to high to bring liquid to a boil.
5. Lower heat, cover, and simmer for about 20 minutes or until soup starts to appear milky. Cooking longer is okay, if you prefer more blended flavors.
6. If using sesame seeds and starting with raw variety, place them in a dry skillet over medium-high heat and toast for about 5 minutes, until they become fragrant, golden, and begin to pop. Remove them immediately from pan so they don't burn, and let them cool for at least 1 minute. Grind the seeds to release the flavors (use food processor or mortar & pestle).
7. Sprinkle sesame seeds and/or pepper, if desired.

VARIATIONS:

- Can use beef (1/4 pound, cut into 2-inch strips, which can be browned with garlic).
- Can use oysters (1/4 pound, which can be sautéed with garlic).
- For vegetarians, mushrooms are a good substitute.