

SIMPLE MISO SOUP

I craved miso soup throughout most of my last pregnancy and most of this one. The clean, salty, refreshing, slightly earthy quality of miso soup is one of my favorite things about going out for sushi. But, since you can't really eat sushi when you're pregnant, I decided to try my hand at making it at home. After quite a lot of research I came up with this simple, MSG free recipe for miso soup. Most miso soup recipes are made with dashi powder, but it was nearly impossible to find MSG free dashi. The MSG does add quite a lot of flavor but it also adds a ton of sodium. Making the miso broth from scratch helps control the amount of sodium in your soup. Dashi is essentially a shortcut to making the clear broth part of miso soup. You can make a great miso soup without dashi by using wakame seaweed and bonito flakes to make an MSG free miso broth. I had Rosauers (our local grocery store) order the bonito flakes for me but you could also find them at a Asian market or health food store. You can make great miso soup at home!

Ingredients.

6 cups water
4 four inch kombu (seaweed) pieces
1 1/2 cup loosely packed bonito flakes
2 tablespoons wakame (ready-to-use) seaweed flakes
1-1 1/2 cup firm silken tofu, cut into small cubes
1/2 cup white miso
scallions, thinly sliced
toasted sesame oil (optional)
salt (optional)

Directions.

Fill a large saucepan with the water, add the kombu, cover and soak for 30 minutes.

After 30 minutes, slowly bring the water to a simmer. Add the bonito flakes and gently simmer for a few minutes. Turn off the heat and allow the broth to sit for five minutes before straining the broth through a fine mesh strainer, discard the bonito flakes and the kombu.

Simmer the clear broth for 15 minutes. Scoop 1 cup of the broth into a medium sized bowl, add the 1/2 cup of miso and whisk until the miso has dissolved. Gently stir in the, miso/broth, wakame flakes and tofu. Simmer over very low heat for a few minutes, to heat the tofu through. Taste for flavor, add a bit more miso or a tiny bit of salt if desired.

Transfer the soup to serving bowls, garnish with the scallions and a tiny drizzle of toasted sesame oil. Enjoy immediately.

Serves 4.

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