

Making Dashi

The flavor of Japanese cuisine, it would be true to say, is determined by the quality of the dashi. Here are basic recipes of four different types of popular dashi.



ICHIBAN DASHI

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Ichiban (primary) dashi is almost pure umami broth. The synergy between the kombu and katsuobushi produce and boost the clear taste of umami. Made from the finest ingredients, it has a rich golden color and does not taste any astringency that other dashi from other ingredients usually has. The clarity and subtle aroma of ichiban dashi is ideal for making clear soups. Ichiban dashi itself is delicious but it would draw out the flavor of other foods without paying too much attention to the ingredients.

- 1.8liter/60oz of soft water
- 40g/1.4oz of Rishiri kombu
- 50g/1.7oz of Katsuobushi Honkarebushi flakes (blood line should be removed)

1. Place water and kombu in a pod and heat over low heat.
2. Slowly raising temperature to 140°F /60°C and simmer it for 1 hour at the temperature in order to bring out the maximum umami from the kombu.
3. Remove kombu and raise the temperature to 185°F /85°C over high heat.



4. When temperature reaches 185°F /85°C, add katsuobushi flakes and wait for the katsuobushi flakes to thoroughly soaked up water.
5. After waiting for about 10 seconds, strain liquid throughout a fine-mesh cloth and leave to drain naturally without squeezing the katsuobushi flakes.



"Kuragakoi" is a cellar-aging technique for fine kombu to produce an excellent vintage kombu. Like wine, it's laid down for one to a few years in a temperature- and humidity-controlled storeroom.

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OKUI KAISEIDO CO.,



利尻昆布 Rishiri kombu



Rishiri kombu is the king of kombu and most expensive one in Japan. It is known for having a hard fiber and is usually for us to extract umami from it, but if heating slowly at 140°F /60°C it produces very clean and rich dashi with clear golden color. It is an essential ingredient of Kaiseki and Shojin cuisine and has sweet flavor.

羅臼昆布 Rausu kombu



Rausu kombu has very soft fiber and is known for wider and thin shape. When soaked in heated water, it gives a gooey and slimy texture along with umami. Rausu creates very rich flavor dashi and it has darker brown color than the dashi from Rishiri and Makombu. It is well used for Kobujime (Kombu cured raw fish) and Kobumaki (Kombu rolled filled with cooked fish).

日高昆布 Hidaka kombu



Hidaka kombu has also soft fiber and usually whole kombu is used for simmered dish, Kobumaki (Konbu rolled filled with cooked fish) and tsukudani condiments. It creates dashi with darker brown color and less sweet, but is not usually used for creating dashi since it has strong kombu taste.

真昆布 Makombu



Makombu is the high quality kombu along with Rishiri but has softer fiber than Rishiri. It is used mainly in Osaka area, compared with Rishiri is popular in Kyoto. Dashi from Makombu has rich golden color and mild sweet flavor. Since it has wider and thicker shape than others, it is used for cooking like Shio-kombu and tsukudani-kombu but is also presented as special offering at religious event.

