

September Spice Club:

Shichimi Togarashi



This particular organic shichimi togarashi blend comes from Gryffon Ridge, which states: “Roughly translated, this is Japanese for ‘seven spice chili pepper.’ A fragrant combination that varies by region, 7-spice is used to add both heat and flavor to many dishes such as soba noodles, udon, beef tataki, rice, and yakitori. This has very mild heat. Ingredients: chili pepper, orange peel (*to mimic yuzu*), white sesame seed, poppy seed, black sesame seed, Sichuan pepper, nori seaweed.”

Its origins are believed to come from 17th century Edo (modern Tokyo). Every maker has their own recipe with the only required ingredient being the *togarashi*, or chili pepper, itself. Other commonly included ingredients are flax seeds, sansho pepper pods, and shiso seeds.

MasterClass.com suggests using this versatile blend to sprinkle on avocado toast, plain rice, or popcorn; adding it to tempura batter for an added kick for tempura vegetables; serving it with *yakitori* (grilled meats), *shabu-shabu* (hot pot), or stir fry; or for elevating the flavor of raw clams or oysters! Given its spicy nature, we do suggest starting with a little and adding more to taste.

Blistered Shishito Peppers with Shichimi Togarashi

Nik Sharma, NikSharmaCooks.com

Vegan, GF; yield: 4 servings

“Smoky and blistered, with bits of sour and salty goodness accompanied by a game of Russian roulette, is how I like to describe this dish of green shishito peppers. The taste is addictive, and you never know who will get that one hot pepper (I always pray and hope it isn’t me).”

- 1 Tbsp neutral oil with a high smoke point, such as grapeseed
- 1 lb. shishito peppers
- 1 ½ tsp shichimi togarashi
- 1 tsp toasted sesame oil
- 2 tsp Chinese black vinegar, malt vinegar, or apple cider vinegar
- Flaky salt

Heat a large wok or stainless-steel skillet over high heat. Add the oil and heat until the oil begins to shimmer.

Add the peppers, and stir-fry until the peppers start to turn tender and blister in spots, 3-4 minutes.

Add the togarashi seasoning, sesame oil, vinegar, and salt to the peppers and toss to coat well. Remove from heat and transfer to a serving dish. Serve immediately.



Ramen Recipe

Yuko and Noriko, JapaneseCooking101.com

“Our soup is simple and easy to make with very accessible ingredients, but it has plenty of good flavor. Anybody can make it! Pork belly is very fatty but it gives soup a wonderful taste, and cooked pork itself works as a topping. Just cool the soup and remove any excess fat from the soup.”

SOUP

6 cups water
1 oz ginger root, sliced
3 cloves garlic,
skinned
1 bunch green onions
4 Tbsp soy sauce
3 Tbsp sake
1 tsp salt
1 Tbsp sesame oil

SALTED PORK

1 lb. pork belly
2 tsp salt

NOODLES

3-4 bunches dried
Chukamen noodles
OR IF USING
PASTA:
10 oz. dried thin
spaghetti
8 cups water
2 Tbsp baking soda

TOPPINGS

Soft boiled egg, halved
Bean sprouts,
blanched briefly
Green onions, cut
finely
A pinch of shichimi
togarashi!

Rub salt on pork and let it sit overnight in the fridge.

Put water, ginger root, garlic, green onions and salted pork in a pot, and boil at high heat. Skim fat and other floating scum. Then cover, reduce to low heat, and simmer for 1 ½ - 2 hours (or cook in a pressure cooker for 20 minutes). Let the broth and pork cool completely in pot. Strain and save the separated broth and pork.

Let the broth cool in the fridge at least a couple of hours or overnight, and then remove the solidified fat. Keep cooked pork in the fridge too so that it can be easily sliced later.



AFTER THE COOLING PERIOD



Prepare the rest of the toppings first, before making the soup and noodles. Once the noodles are cooked, you will need to add the soup and toppings right away or the noodles will get soft, so you won't have time to prepare the toppings then.

Boil the broth and add soy sauce, sake, salt and sesame oil. Let it simmer at very low heat until the noodles are ready.

Cook dried Chuka dried noodles separately according to the package. Just before the noodles are done, pour the soup in serving bowls. Strain water from the noodles and immediately divide the noodles into the serving bowls. If you are using dried thin spaghetti: In boiling water in a pot, add baking soda (be careful, it may boil over), then the spaghetti. Cook the pasta according to the package, and strain. Immediately divide noodles into bowls with the soup.

Top with boiled eggs, bean sprouts, green onions, sliced pork, and a pinch of shichimi togarashi.

Suggested Reading on Japanese Cuisine

Makiko Itoh, *The Just Bento Cookbook*

Masaharu Morimoto, *Mastering the Art of Japanese Home Cooking*

Andy Matsuda, *Let's Make Sushi!: Step-by-Step Tutorials and Essential Recipes for Rolls, Nigiri, Sashimi and More From a Master Sushi Chef*

Sawako Okochi, *Love Japan: Recipes From Our Japanese American Kitchen*

Eric Rath, *Japan's Cuisines: Food, Place and Identity*

Hiroko Shimbo, *Hiroko's American Kitchen: Cooking with Japanese Flavors*

Corrine Trang, *Noodles Every Day: Delicious Asian Recipes from Ramen to Rice Sticks*