

Basic Macrobiotic Recipes

From *Basic Macrobiotic Cooking*

Julia Ferré

Getting started eating macrobiotic foods is as easy as turning on your stove. Grains, beans, and vegetables are accessible in most supermarkets and natural food stores. Look for whole grain brown rice, dried beans, and fresh vibrant vegetables. Favor organic options if available.

The following recipes are a sample of various dishes that create a foundation of nutrition: brown rice, lentil soup, miso soup, vegetables, and a few sauces to top them all off.

Use quality cookware to prepare your food such as stainless steel or cast-iron ware. Avoid aluminum as well as Teflon pans.

Soak the larger whole grains and dried beans before cooking. Soaking is a vital step that allows these foods to cook thoroughly. Dried grains and beans store well, but contain enzyme inhibitors and other factors that interfere with digestion. Soaking neutralizes the effect of these inhibitors, enhances nutrient availability, and increases flavor.

BROWN RICE, SHORT OR LONG GRAIN — YIELD: 6 CUPS FOR SHORT RICE; 6½ CUPS FOR LONG

Brown rice is a staple for many people who eat natural foods. Simple to prepare and complementary to most beans and vegetables, brown rice provides a foundation for building meals.

2 cups brown rice
4 cups water
½ tsp sea salt

Procedure — Wash and drain brown rice. Soak 4 to 8 hours. Add sea salt after soaking. Cover. Bring to a boil. Simmer over low heat for 1 hour, using a heat diffuser if needed.

BROWN RICE — YIELD: 6 CUPS FOR SHORT RICE; 6½ CUPS FOR LONG RICE

Soaking is recommended before cooking brown rice. If there is no time to soak, roast first. Roasting inactivates the enzyme inhibitors, boosts flavor, and produces a light and fluffy dish.

2 cups short or long grain brown rice
4 cups water
½ tsp sea salt

Procedure — Wash and drain brown rice. Bring water to a boil. Place rice in a separate pan, either stainless steel or cast iron, and dry roast (no oil) over medium heat for about 10 minutes, stirring constantly, until fragrant and lightly browned. Rice will pop. Mix roasted grain, boiling water, and sea salt in a pan. Bring to a boil. Cover. Simmer over low heat for 1 hour, using a heat diffuser if needed.

BUCKWHEAT — YIELD: 7 CUPS

Buckwheat is a hearty delicious grain and simple to prepare. It requires no washing or soaking. Roasting improves its flavor. Kasha sold in natural food stores is buckwheat that has already been roasted; it can be cooked by adding to boiling water.

2 cups buckwheat
4 cups water
½ tsp sea salt

To prepare buckwheat, follow the procedure as listed above for roasted brown rice. Dry roast buckwheat for 3 to 4 minutes until fragrant, add to boiling water, and simmer 25 minutes.

MILLET — YIELD: 4 CUPS

Millet is a whole grain with a thin kernel wall that can be cooked without soaking. For best results, add to boiling water to cook thoroughly.

1 cup millet
3 cups water
1/8 tsp sea salt

Procedure — Wash and drain millet. Bring water to a boil. Add sea salt, then millet. Cover. Return to a boil. Simmer over low heat for 25 to 30 minutes, using a heat diffuser if needed.

TOPPINGS FOR GRAINS

Serve grains with roasted nuts, seeds, sauces, or a variety of condiments available in natural food stores, such as sesame seed salt (gomashio). Brown rice and millet are delicious served with roasted almonds, pumpkin seeds, or sunflower seeds.

ROASTED NUTS AND SEEDS

almonds, 12 minutes
pumpkin seeds, 7 minutes
sunflower seeds 10 minutes

Procedure — Roast nuts or seeds in the oven when roasting a large quantity. Place one layer of any kind of nut or seed on a baking sheet. Place in a pre-heated, 350-degree oven. Roast for the times indicated, until fragrant, beginning to pop, and browning. Stir occasionally. If desired, add soy sauce after roasting. Place hot roasted nuts or seeds in a bowl. Add 3 or 4 drops soy sauce per 1/4 cup nuts or seeds.

TAHINI SAUCE — YIELD: 1/2 TO 3/4 CUP

Tahini is made from crushed sesame seeds and makes a rich and flavorful sauce delicious served over buckwheat, noodles, or vegetables. Tahini sauce can be made quickly and is best when hot.

3 Tbsp tahini
1 Tbsp soy sauce
1/4 cup water
2 medium scallions, thin rounds; optional, 1/2 cup

Procedure — Cream tahini with soy sauce, then with water. Add scallions, if used. Place over medium heat. Heat until it boils, 3 to 4 minutes, stirring constantly. It will thicken so add water if needed for desired consistency.

BOILED NOODLES — YIELD: 5 TO 6 CUPS PER 8 OUNCES OF NOODLES

Pasta is made from grain and can be used as a base for a meal. When using noodles with reduced or no wheat, use the shock method. Buckwheat (soba), corn, and rice noodles are delicate. Shocking allows the noodles to cook thoroughly and gently. The cold water temporarily halts the cooking of the outside of the noodles so the inside of the noodles can catch up.

4 quarts of water for up to 16 ounces of noodles
1/4 tsp sea salt for 4 quarts of water, for unsalted noodles

Procedure — Bring water to a boil. Add sea salt if needed. Add noodles and stir to separate them. Bring to a rolling boil. Add 1/2 cup cold water and stir noodles. Bring to a rolling boil a second time. Immediately, add 1/2 cup cold water and stir noodles. Bring to a rolling boil a third time. Add 1/2 cup cold water and stir noodles. Bring to a rolling boil again.

Noodles are done when they are the same color inside and out. Drain. Rinse in cold water. Drain. Rinse and drain again, if needed, until noodles are cooled.

SOBA BROTH WITH TOFU — YIELD: 5 CUPS

Serve pasta with tahini sauce as above or with this broth that features kombu. Kombu is a nutritious sea vegetable that has numerous health benefits, and provides a simple-to-make soup stock. Leftover kombu can be added to bean dishes.

4-inch piece kombu
4 cups cold water
1/2 pound tofu, 1/2-inch cubes, 2 cups
4 medium scallions, thin diagonals, 1 cup
4 Tbsp soy sauce

Procedure — Place kombu in cold water. Cover and bring to a rolling boil. Remove kombu. Add tofu and scallions and bring to a rolling boil again. Add soy sauce.

VEGETABLES

Vegetables are delicious served in any manner alongside grains. Baking is simple and can be done at the same time as roasting seeds.

BAKED WINTER SQUASH – YIELD: 7 CUPS

Use hardy winter squashes such as butternut, acorn, or Hokkaido pumpkin. Butternut squash and acorn squash can be baked whole if desired. Cut squash with a strong knife and remove seeds.

3 pounds winter squash, 1½-inch squares, 8 cups
⅛ tsp sea salt
water as needed

Procedure – Place water to a depth of ½ inch in casserole dish. Mix vegetables with sea salt and add to dish. Cover. Bake 45 minutes to 1 hour at 350 degrees, or until tender.

STIR-FRIED BROCCOLI, CARROT, AND ONION – YIELD: 6 CUPS

Stir-fried vegetables top pasta or rice for a full meal and are quick to prepare. Substitute other vegetables as desired such as cauliflower, snow peas, cabbage, and yellow squash. For additional flavor, sauté 1 tablespoon minced ginger in the oil before adding the first vegetable.

1 tsp light sesame oil or olive oil
1 medium onion, thin crescents, 1½ cups
3 medium carrots, large matchsticks, 2 cups
1 medium bunch broccoli; 6 cups
stems, thin diagonals
2½-inch long flowerets, ½-inch thick at stem
¼ tsp sea salt
½ cup water
1 Tbsp soy sauce, optional

Procedure – Heat oil in a pan over medium to medium-high heat. Sauté onion until transparent. Add the first vegetable listed and sauté briefly. Add remaining vegetables, one kind at a time, in the order listed. Sauté and stir each kind briefly before adding the next one. Add sea salt and water. Cover and bring to a boil. Turn heat to low and simmer 5 minutes. Add soy sauce if using.

SOUPS

Seasoning – Miso and soy sauce are used most often to flavor soups in macrobiotic cooking. Miso and soy sauce are fermented products and are best when heated through but not boiled so that the beneficial bacteria are kept alive. Different kinds of miso can be used separately or mixed to season soup. Dark barley miso, aged about two years or more, is a good choice for daily miso soup.

If making soup for more than one meal, season only

the portion to be served. Ladle desired amount into another pan and season, or season the individual bowls.

To season: Dilute miso with ¼ cup or less hot broth, then mix miso with soup. For soy sauce, add directly to soup.

KITCHEN SOUP – YIELD: 11 CUPS

This is a simple soup that lends itself well to variation. Substitute other vegetables or add herbs and spices as desired, such as pepper, dill weed, thyme, or garlic.

1 large celery stalk, thin quarter rounds, ¾ cup
1 small cabbage; 5 cups
core, finely minced
leaves, shredded
1 medium onion, minced, 1½ cups
1 medium carrot, thin quarter rounds, ¾ cup
8 cups water
¼ tsp sea salt
4 Tbsp soy sauce or 2 Tbsp miso

Procedure – Layer vegetables from bottom to top in the order listed. Add cold water. Sprinkle sea salt on top. Cover and bring to a boil. Simmer over low heat for 30 minutes. Season with miso or soy sauce.

ONE-POT MEAL – YIELD: 14 CUPS

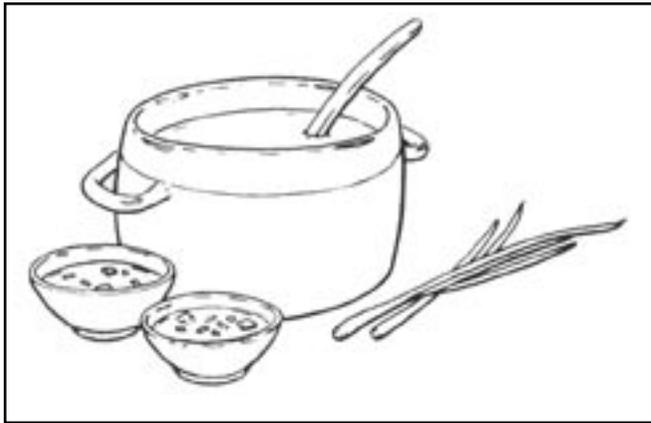
Sometimes it is necessary to save time. This soup combines vegetables, tofu, and noodles to create a meal.

1 small butternut squash, 1-inch squares, 4 cups
1 large onion, thin crescents, 2 cups
1 large carrot, shaved, 1 cup
10 cups water
½ tsp sea salt
1 cup whole wheat ribbon noodles
½ pound tofu, ½-inch cubes, 2 cups
5 Tbsp soy sauce

Procedure – Layer vegetables from bottom to top in the order listed. Add cold water. Sprinkle sea salt on top. Cover and bring to a boil. Simmer over low heat for 15 minutes. Add noodles and simmer 7 to 10 minutes. Add tofu and simmer 5 minutes. Season with soy sauce.

BEAN SOUPS

Beans are healthy and delicious and easy to cook. Lentil soup and pea soup are old favorites. Leftover kombu from making soba broth can be cut into small pieces and added to either soup if desired.



LENTIL SOUP — YIELD: 10 CUPS

- 2 cups lentils, boiled in 6 cups water**
- 1 tsp light sesame oil or olive oil**
- 1 medium onion, minced, 1½ cups**
- 2 Tbsp minced parsley**
- 2 medium celery stalks, quarter rounds, 1½ cups**
- 2 medium carrots, thin quarter rounds, 1½ cups**
- 4 or more cups additional water**
- 2 bay leaves**
- ½ tsp sea salt**
- 2 Tbsp soy sauce**

Procedure – Soak lentils if desired, up to 3 hours. Boil in 6 cups water until soft, 30 to 40 minutes. Heat oil in another pot and sauté onion until transparent. Add vegetables in the order listed, one kind at a time. Sauté each kind for 1 to 2 minutes. Add the additional water. Layer lentils and cooking water on top. Sprinkle sea salt on top. Cover and bring to a boil. Simmer 30 minutes over low heat. Add soy sauce. Remove bay leaves when serving.

SPLIT PEA SOUP — YIELD: 10 CUPS

- 2 cups split peas, boiled in 6 cups water**
- 4 or more cups additional water**
- 1 large onion, minced, 2 cups**
- 2 medium celery stalks, quarter rounds, 1½ cups**
- 2 medium carrots, thin quarter rounds, 1½ cups**
- ½ tsp sea salt**
- 5 tsp soy sauce, optional**

Procedure – Boil split peas for 1 hour in 6 cups water until soft. Using the same pot, add the additional water. Mix with beans so water is at the bottom of the pot. Add vegetables. Sprinkle sea salt on top. Cover and bring to a boil. Simmer 30 minutes over low heat, using a heat diffuser if needed. Add soy sauce if used.

DRESSINGS

These two dressings are included to add to your stock of recipes. These two are versatile for all types of foods.

TAHINI DRESSING — FOR 8 CUPS VEGETABLES. ALL-PURPOSE SALAD DRESSING. YIELD: ½ CUP

- 4 Tbsp tahini**
- 1 Tbsp umeboshi vinegar**
- 1 Tbsp lemon juice**
- 2 to 3 Tbsp water**

Procedure – Mix tahini, umeboshi vinegar, and lemon juice together. Add water and thin until pourable or to desired consistency. Gently toss with salad or serve separately.

OLIVE OIL AND UMEBOSHI VINEGAR DRESSING — FOR 4 TO 6 CUPS VEGETABLES. ALL-PURPOSE DRESSING. YIELD: ¼ CUP

- 3 Tbsp olive oil**
- 1 Tbsp umeboshi vinegar**

Procedure – Mix ingredients together. Use for green salads, rice salads, bean salads, or drizzled on cooked vegetables or noodles.

BANCHA TWIG TEA — YIELD: 4 CUPS

Bancha twig tea (or kukicha) is made from the roasted lower leaves and twigs of the tea bush. Like all tea, it contains some caffeine. However, the lower leaves and twigs contain less than outer leaves, and the leaves and twigs are roasted, which further reduce the effect of the caffeine. Bancha twig tea is a soothing tea which can be served every day.

Use a glass or enameled teapot to simmer and steep tea. The twig tea can be used for more than one pot of tea. With each new pot, add 1 tablespoon new twigs for 4 to 5 cups cold water. Discard when twigs accumulate to a ½-inch layer.

- 1 Tbsp bancha twig tea**
- 4 cups cold water**

Procedure – Add tea to cold water. Cover pan or teapot and bring to a boil. For strong tea, simmer 15 to 20 minutes, then serve. For mild tea, simmer 3 to 5 minutes, then steep 15 to 20 minutes before serving.