

FOOD & DINING

Experiment with spicy international cuisine

Experimenting with cuisine is one of the joys of cooking. It can be fun to prepare international cuisine at home, especially for those bold enough to try recipes that incorporate foods from more than one culture. Such is the case with the following recipe for “Korean-style Spicy Bouillabaisse Hotpot” from Takashi Sugimoto and Marcia Iwatate’s “Shunju: New Japanese Cuisine” (Periplus). Working with live seafood makes this dish particularly interesting, and the authors even include substitutes so those who have a hard time finding many of the ingredients can still try their hands at this delicious hybrid dish.

KOREAN-STYLE SPICY BOUILLABAISSE HOTPOT SERVES 4

- 5 quarts water
- 1 squid, about 11 1/2 ounces, cleaned (see note)
- 2 medium watari gani (blue swimmer crabs), about 6 1/2 ounces (substitute with dungeness or any other live crab or lobster), cleaned (see note)
- 5 pounds kinki (red snapper) (substitute with any fatty, white flesh fish), cleaned, rinsed and heads removed, cut crosswise into steaks
- 6 1/2 ounces oysters (serve 1 or more per person depending on size), shucked
- 1 1/2 pounds scallops in their shell (serve 1 or more per person depending on size); (substitute with unshelled or frozen scallops)
- 5 ounces nagate ebi (similar to Italian scampi); (substitute with crawfish, slice in half lengthwise and devein)
- 1 1/2 pounds hakusai (Chinese cabbage), roughly chopped

- 5 ounces mizuna (pot herb mustard green); (substitute with any mustard greens or other green leaf vegetable, roughly chopped)
- 3 1/2 ounces naga negi (long welsh onion); (substitute with white part of scallion, roughly chopped)

Seasonings

- 2 tablespoons Korean virgin sesame oil
- 1/3 cup koikuchi shoyu (soy sauce)
- 2 medium cloves garlic
- 2 tablespoons kochujang (Korean red chili paste), or to taste
- 1/2 teaspoon sugar
- 1 teaspoon Korean red pepper flakes

1. Add the water and seafood to a large saucepan or stockpot and heat. When it reaches a hard boil, reduce the heat to low and simmer for 30 minutes or until the stock tastes rich. Skim off the foam that rises to the surface.
2. Combine all the seasoning ingredients and mix thoroughly. Adjust the red chili paste to taste. Add the seasoning to the pot.
3. Pour the stew into the earthenware or copper pot. Put the pot on the charcoal brazier or the portable gas stove at the table. Adjust heat to low to maintain a strong simmer throughout the course of the meal.
4. Add half of the chopped Chinese cabbage, thicker bottom pieces first. When the cabbage is thoroughly cooked, add half of the mizuna and welsh onion and, as soon as they have wilted, serve immediately, divided into individual small bowls. Or allow diners to serve themselves directly from the pot.
5. Repeat when diners are ready for their next round of



portions. Don't forget to frequently skim off the foam that floats to the surface.

Note: To clean the squid, wash thoroughly under running water to remove the sliminess. Grasp the head section just below the eyes and pull the body away from the tail, fin and ink sac. Remove the ink sac carefully, taking care not to break it. Cut away the tentacles. Chop everything into bite-size pieces.

To clean the crabs, wash thoroughly under running water. Grab the legs firmly with your left hand and pull the entire chest section free from the hard shell. Cut out and discard the feathery lung sections. Chop the legs off and chop the body into bite-size pieces.

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