

Vegan Tsukemen (Dipping Ramen)

Vegan tsukemen is a special breed of ramen. The noodles are served separate from the broth, which is super thick and rich with a lot of umami and a hint of spiciness. You dip the noodles and toppings into the broth as you eat. It's the best ramen for summertime. The recipe includes meaty shredded king oyster mushrooms.



5 from 4 votes

Cook Time

1 hr

Course: Dinner Cuisine: Japanese Servings: 2 Author: Thomas

Ingredients

- 2 servings ramen noodles preferably fresh or frozen

Choose either:

- 1 cup raw cashews soaked overnight then drained OR
- 1/2 cup cashew butter unsweetened and unsalted

For the broth:

- 2 Tablespoons peanut oil or neutral cooking oil
- 8 cloves garlic minced or pressed
- 1.5 Tablespoons ginger minced or grated
- 2 Tablespoons miso preferably white or yellow
- 1 teaspoon doubanjiang can add more for higher spice level, see note
- 1/4 cup sake or water
- 2 cups vegetable stock
- 1 dried shiitake mushroom
- 1 piece kombu 2x4 inches (5x10 centimeters)

Toppings

- 1 large king oyster mushroom 1/3 to 1/2 pound or 150 to 230 grams
- Oil spray
- Salt and pepper
- Menma
- Baked tofu
- 8 small strips of roasted nori seaweed

Garnishes

- Toasted sesame oil
- 1 green onion chopped finely
- Shichimi togarashi optional
- Lime wedges optional

Instructions

1. If you're making the king oyster mushroom shredded "chicken", preheat the oven to 425F (220C).

Cook the noodles

1. Bring a large pot of water to a boil and cook the noodles until just done. For fresh noodles this should take 2-3 minutes of boiling. Drain the noodles when done and give them a rinse under the tap with cold water. Set them aside to cool. You can cover and refrigerate them if you prefer them chilled.

Prepare the king oyster mushroom

1. While waiting for the water for the noodles to boil, you can prepare the mushroom. Use a fork to carve deep slits in 4 sides of the mushroom stem. Use your hands to pull apart the strands and shred the mushroom. Place the mushroom strands on a lined baking sheet in a single layer. Spray briefly with oil and season with salt and pepper, stirring as you do both.

Make the broth

1. Heat the peanut (or neutral cooking) oil in a medium saucepan over medium heat. When hot, add the ginger and garlic. Stir until the herbs are nearly cooked through, 4-5 minutes.
2. Add the miso and doubanjiang. Mix it with the ginger and garlic to form an even paste. Stir until the paste is slightly browned, 3-4 minutes.
3. Add the cashews or cashew butter. If using cashews, stir and cook until the cashews are blended with the paste and slightly toasted, 4-5 minutes. If using cashew butter, stir until the butter is integrated with the other paste and slightly toasted, 2-3 minutes.
4. Pour in the sake (or water) and stir well to scrape up any bits stuck to the bottom of the saucepan.
5. Turn off the heat and stir in the vegetable broth.
6. Transfer the contents of the saucepan to a high-speed blender. Blend until the mixture is smooth and uniform, about 1 minute on high. Transfer the mixture back to the saucepan, Add the dried shiitake mushroom and kombu. Cover and heat over low heat.

Cook the king oyster mushroom

1. By now, the oven should be preheated. Place the baking tray in the oven and bake until the mushrooms are cooked through and crispy around the edges, 15-20 minutes. Stir the mushrooms at least once during baking.

Make final adjustments and prepare to serve

1. While the mushrooms are baking, you can prepare the other toppings.
2. You should also adjust the consistency of the broth as needed. It should be quite thick, much thicker than a typical soup. Uncover the saucepan and turn up the heat slightly to help the broth thicken more quickly. Stir in more vegetable broth (or water) to thin the broth out.
3. If you want the broth to be very hot at the time of serving, you can heat the small broth bowls by filling them with boiling water. You should discard the hot water before filling the bowls and be VERY careful handling the hot bowls.

Assemble and serve

1. Distribute the noodles evenly between two large bowls. Add the menma, shredded king oyster "chicken", baked tofu, nori sheets, and/or whatever other toppings you plan to use.
2. Distribute the broth among the small bowls, taking care to remove and discard the shiitake mushroom and kombu. Garnish each bowl of broth with some sesame oil, green onion, lime juice, and shichimi togarashi (if using).
3. Serve immediately.

Notes

For suggestions for other ramen toppings, see my other ramen recipes (there are links to them in the blog post).

The recipe makes two large meal-sized portions or four appetizer-sized portions.

You can increase the amount of doubanjiang if you'd like a spicier broth, up to 1 Tablespoon.

If you have more than one person cooking, it's possible to do some of the cooking in parallel. Have one person focus on the noodles and mushrooms and the other on the broth. This way, the cooking time can be cut down to 35-40 minutes

In any case the broth should simmer with the shiitake mushroom and kombu for at least 15 minutes to infuse more flavor. Up to 60 minutes of simmering can be helpful, but keep an eye on the thickness of the broth and add vegetable stock (or water) to thin it out.