

# Steamed Cabbage (Sweet and Sour)

## Ingredients

Round cabbage . . . . .	1 head	Ginger powder . . . . .	½ tsp.
Rice vinegar . . . . .	3½ Tbsp.	Sesame oil . . . . .	½ tsp.
Sake . . . . .	2 Tbsp.	Fresh lime juice . . . . .	1 tsp.
Mirin . . . . .	2 Tbsp.	White pepper . . . . .	pinch
Light soy sauce . . . . .	1 tsp.	Candied ginger, minced . . .	2 pieces
Grapeseed oil . . . . .	1 Tbsp.	Salt . . . . .	if needed

## Directions

Remove outer leaves from **cabbage** and cut into 1-inch strips — Discard core — Mince **candied ginger** fine — Set up steamer

1. Steam **cabbage** strips for *6-8 minutes* until tender but with slight bite.
2. While **cabbage** steams, heat **grapeseed oil** in wok or skillet over medium heat. Add **ginger powder** and bloom for *30 seconds* until fragrant.
3. Add **sake**, **rice vinegar**, and **mirin**. Bring to simmer and reduce by about one-third to concentrate flavors and mellow acidity, about *3-4 minutes*.
4. Stir in **light soy sauce**, **white pepper**, and minced **candied ginger**. Cook for another *1-2 minutes* to integrate the **candied ginger** flavors.
5. Remove from heat and stir in **sesame oil** and **fresh lime juice**.
6. Add steamed **cabbage** to the pan with the sauce. Toss gently for *1 minute* to coat evenly.
7. Serve warm or at room temperature.

## Equipment Required

- Steamer setup (bamboo steamer, electric steamer, or large pot with steaming rack)
- Wok or large skillet for sauce
- Sharp knife and cutting board
- Measuring spoons and cups
- Wooden spoon or spatula
- Serving platter
- Small bowl for mincing candied ginger
- Fine-mesh strainer (optional, for lime juice)

## Mise en Place

- Set up steamer and bring water to boil before starting
- Have all sauce ingredients measured and ready
- Mince **candied ginger** finely before cooking begins
- Cut **cabbage** just before steaming to prevent oxidation
- Juice **lime** fresh and strain if desired

## Ingredient Tips

- Choose firm, heavy **cabbage** heads with tight, crisp leaves
- **Grapeseed oil** can be substituted with vegetable or canola oil
- Quality **sake** makes a difference - avoid cooking sake if possible
- **Candied ginger** should be soft and pliable, not dried out
- **White pepper** provides clean heat without competing with other flavors

- Use fresh **lime juice** only - bottled lacks the volatile oils needed for palate cleansing

## Preparation Tips

- Cut **cabbage** strips uniformly for even cooking
- Watch steaming time carefully - smaller pieces cook faster than wedges
- Don't over-reduce the sauce - it should remain light and bright
- Bloom **ginger powder** carefully to avoid burning
- Add **sesame oil** and **lime juice** off heat to preserve delicate aromatics
- Taste sauce before final seasoning - **candied ginger** adds natural sweetness
- Toss gently to avoid breaking the tender **cabbage** strips

## Make Ahead & Storage

- **Cabbage** can be cut up to *2 hours* ahead and stored covered
- Sauce can be made up to *1 day* ahead and gently rewarmed
- Add **lime juice** only when ready to serve for maximum brightness
- Best served fresh, but leftovers keep *2 days* refrigerated
- Reheat gently or serve at room temperature as a cold salad
- Do not freeze - texture will be compromised

## Serving Suggestions

- Perfect as palate cleanser alongside spam musubi or other rich dishes
- Serve between every 2-3 pieces of musubi for optimal effect
- Excellent with grilled meats or fried foods
- Can be served warm or at room temperature
- Provide small chopsticks or forks for easy pickup
- Pairs well with steamed rice and other Asian-inspired sides