



## 昆布出汁 *Kombu Dashi* **KELP ALONE Stock**

### **Making stock... DASHI**

The word *dashi*, derives from the verb *hiki dasu*, “to draw out” or “extract.” Indeed, all types of *dashi* are extracted liquid essences, many made by soaking sun-dried ingredients in cold water; in some cases heat is briefly applied to ingredients. Depending upon the specific items used, the timing (when heat is applied) and degree of heat (temperature) varies. The simplest most versatile *dashi* is ***kombu dashi*** or **KELP ALONE Stock**.

It will be useful to have a lidded glass jar or covered beaker. Assemble the stock at night before retiring to simplify and speed food preparation the following day. Or, if you work outside the home, assemble in the morning for use that evening when making supper.

Unless you live in a particularly hot or humid climate in which food spoilage might be a problem, the **extract is best made and stored at room temperature** and used within 12 to 15 hours. If making stock this way concerns you, assemble and place in the refrigerator from the start. Most refrigerated stock requires a minimum of 6 to 8 hours to develop flavor. Whether first extracted at room temperature or refrigerated from the start, when extended storage is required, it is best to refrigerate. Kelp Alone Stock can be held for several days if refrigerated. **Freezing does not work well**. The crystallized kelp extracts often smell unpleasantly of iodine after being defrosted.



All varieties of *kombu* are rich in *umami seibun*, (glutamates), the essence of flavor enhancement.

The higher the percentage of glutamates, the more heat-sensitive the *kombu* will be; **cold water extractions will yield the best results** with gentle heat being applied, if at all, after a minimum of 30 minutes soaking at room temperature. Cold water extracts can be kept for 4 or 5 days in the refrigerator. Use a glass jar for best results. Early signs of spoilage are clouding and a thick sediment at the bottom of the container. If your tap water has a metallic aftertaste, you will probably find that using bottled “spring” water will yield better results.

## Different Varieties of *KOMBU* (Kelp)

ひだかこんぶ

### 日高昆布 *Hidaka kombu*

Named after the place in Hokkaido where this variety is grown and harvested. *Hidaka* is typically thinner and narrower than other varieties of kelp; it has a mild (briny) flavor and is relatively low in glutamates. Heat is usually applied with little or no previous soaking to extract the most flavor from *Hidaka kombu*. This type of kelp is sold as *dashi kombu* (literally “kelp for stock”) in most supermarkets in the Tokyo metropolitan area.

まこんぶ

### 真昆布 *ma kombu*

Means “true” kelp (*Laminaria ochotenis*). It is fairly thick and broad, usually a dark slate color. Most often it is packaged in 3 or 4-inch lengths. This variety of kelp is sold throughout the Kansai area (southwest, including Osaka and Kyoto) as *dashi kombu* (literally “kelp for stock”) and is used for nearly all home-style preparations. *Ma kombu*, even the lesser grade product, is high in glutamates. For superior flavor extraction, it is best to let the kelp sit in water for 10 minutes at room temperature before applying gentle heat.

らうすこんぶ

### 羅臼昆布 *Rausu kombu*

Often the best choice in vegan kitchens, the rich, almost buttery broth is reminiscent of meat-based stocks. Deep flavor but typically produces a cloudy stock that is less attractive in clear soups and sauces.

りしりこんぶ

### 利尻昆布 *Rishiri kombu*

Yields an exquisitely clear broth with a deep, rich flavor and silky mouth feel. The very best grades are quite expensive (a single strip several yards long could cost as much as \$75), and favored by chefs at elegant establishments. Broken and cut bits are often available at more reasonable prices.

## ***NIBAN DASHI* (Secondary Stock)** Makes about 2 cups.

### INGREDIENTS:

- 3 or 4 pieces *kombu* (kelp) softened after making KELP ALONE Stock
- 2 and 1/2 cups fresh cold water (use bottled “spring” water for best results)

### PROCEDURE:

Place softened kelp in a saucepan with fresh cold water. Place the pot over gentle heat and slowly bring it to a simmer. Adjust the heat as necessary to maintain a gentle simmer and cook the broth for at least 10 minutes, and up to 30. Skim away any froth that appears.



Strain and use immediately, or let cool in the pot before transferring to a lidded glass jar. Refrigerate for up to 2 days. The kelp that remains can still be used to make relish (KANSHA pg. 152), or added to your compost heap.