

Briny Black Sauce 海苔佃煮 *Nori Tsukuda Ni*



High humidity in Japan, especially during the rainy season, makes it a challenge to keep dried foods, dry. Despite the anti-moisture pellets that are included in most modern packages, sheets of *yaki nori*, the toasted laver best known to Americans as wrappers for rolled *sushi*, go limp. Soggy *yaki nori* can be transformed into a thick, yummy sauce to spread on skillet-seared sea scallops or blocks of *tōfu* before being broiled *dengaku*-style. Makes about 1/4 cup NORI PASTE (*nori tsukudani*).

3 sheets *yaki nori* (toasted laver); torn or limp sheets are perfect
1/2 teaspoon sugar
1 tablespoon *saké* (rice wine)
2 teaspoons *shōyu* (soy sauce)

Crumble or tear the sheets of *yaki nori* into small bits, or cut them with a scissors into thin strips. Place these bits and pieces in a small saucepan or skillet and add the sugar, *saké*, and soy sauce. Let the mixture sit for a moment or two until it becomes moist. Stir to make a paste.



Slowly heat the mixture, stirring it until smooth and slightly aromatic. Remove the saucepan from the heat and allow the mixture to cool before transferring it to a lidded glass jar for longer storage (up to 2 weeks in the refrigerator).



Other ways to use Briny Black Sauce:

Toss pasta , *udon* or soba noodles with some briny *nori* paste to make a vegan version of *al nero di seppia* (squid ink pasta).

Briny Black Sauce can also be tossed with barely-blanched leafy greens to make a salad-like side dish.