



鮭そぼろ
Shaké Soboro
**Seasoned Salmon
 Flakes**

In the old-fashioned *washoku* kitchen semi-preserved fish, such as salt-cured salmon, was a mainstay item. Typically it was simply boiled and flaked, or broiled and served with grated *daikon* radish. Any leftovers would be seasoned to extend shelflife and re-cycled as a filling for pressed rice “sandwiches” (*omusubi*), or used as a topping for leftover rice with tea-broth (*ocha-zuké*). Lightly cured salmon is still sold in modern supermarkets throughout Japan and is enjoyed for its vibrant taste and ease of preparation. Overseas in Asian grocery stores, you will find salted salmon steaks in the freezer or refrigerated case. They are usually labelled:

AMA-JIO BENI-JAKÉ 甘塩紅鮭

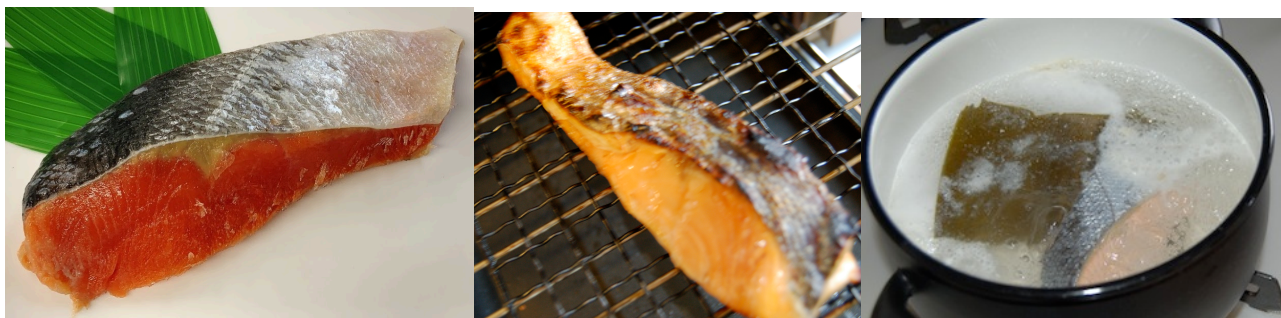
If you have difficulty sourcing lightly cured salmon you can make a similar condiment using fresh salmon (called *NAMA-JAKÉ* 生鮭); instructions below.. In a pinch, you could even use canned salmon drained of its packing liquid to make the flakes: add seasonings and prepare as described below.

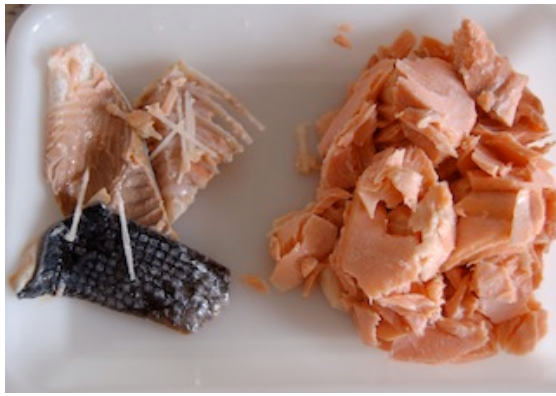
Commercially prepared seasoned salmon flakes are sold in glass jars or vacuum-sealed pouches in most Asian markets. However, nearly all of these products are loaded with chemical preservatives, so I highly recommend making your own.

Makes about 1 cup salmon flakes:

- 1 small slice *ama-jio beni-jaké* (mild, salt-cured red salmon), about 2 ounces with bone and skin attached but scales removed, uncooked
- 2 tablespoons *saké* (rice wine)
- 2 teaspoons sugar + 1 teaspoon *usu kuchi shōyu* (light-colored soy sauce) **OR**
- 1 teaspoons sugar + 1.5 teaspoons *shōyu* (regular soy sauce)

Begin by cooking the salmon. You can **either broil** it until done (about 4 minutes under most home broilers; results pictured on the left), **or blanch** the salmon for 2 minutes in boiling water (results pictured on the right). Either way, the fish must be cooked through – color changes from red to pink and flesh becomes opaque.





When cool enough to handle, separate pink meat from skin, bones and fatty (dark colored) meat. Flake the pink meat and discard skin, bones, and fatty meat.

Separate pink meat from skin, bones and fatty (dark colored) meat. Flake the pink meat as finely as possible by rubbing it between your fingers, or forcing it through a wide-meshed strainer. Discard skin, bones and fatty meat.



Place flaked salmon in a non-stick pan and sprinkle with the *saké*. If you will be using regular soy sauce use the smaller amount of sugar. If using light-colored soy sauce use the larger amount (light colored is NOT LITE... it is actually a higher sodium content than regular, darker-colored soy sauce). Before placing over the heat, toss and stir to distribute *saké* and sugar evenly.



Stirring constantly with a broad, spatula “roast” the salmon slowly over low heat being careful not to let it scorch.

As the salmon begins to dry (about 4 or 5 minutes), drizzle in the soy sauce (light-colored *usukuchi shōyu* or regular soy), stirring vigorously to ensure even distribution.



Continue to “roast” while stirring. The salmon will become drier, slightly fluffy, and quite aromatic (about 3-4 minutes). It may even caramelize slightly.

Remove the pan from the heat and let the flaky fish cool. Rub any large lumps between your fingers to separate.



Whatever you do not use right away store in a glass jar, refrigerated for up to 2 weeks OR, freeze for longer storage (up to 2 months), pressing out air before sealing small packets. Once defrosted, keep the flakes refrigerated and consume within 2 days.