

関西風お雑煮  
**Kansai-fū Ozōni**  
 Classic Kansai Ozōni



Served for brunch on *Gan Jitsu* (New Year's Day), and on many chilly winter mornings thereafter, **ozōni** is enjoyed throughout Japan. The name of the dish is rather straightforward and descriptive: the “o” is an honorific applied to many valued things while the *zō* means “miscellaneous” and *ni* is “to stew or simmer,” which is the method used to make the dish: Honorable Miscellany Stew.

Each region in Japan has its own style, each household its own version. Here is a classic Kansai version served in many homes in Osaka, Nara, Kyoto and Kobe. It includes boiled *omochi*, carrots, *kabura* (white turnips) and their leaves, *shiitaké* mushrooms, and *yuzu* peel (the twist is thought to resemble pine needles, a symbol of strength and endurance because pine trees are evergreen). Seasoning the soup with sweet, pale-colored *shiro miso* is common practice in the Kansai region.

Serves 4.

- 2-3 small white turnips with leaves, about 150 grams/5 ounces
- 4 fresh *shiitaké* mushrooms
- 60 grams/2 ounces carrot, peeled, cut into 4, 1/4-inch thick circles
- 60 grams/2 ounces red carrot (*kintoki ninjin*), peeled, cut into 4, 1/4-inch thick circles
- 800 cc (4 cups) *Dashi* (stock; see **Kitchen Notes** for details)
- 1 teaspoon *usukuchi shōyu* + 1 teaspoon *mirin*
- 4 small strips *yuzu* (or lemon) peel
- 4 pieces *omochi* rice taffy, softened (see **Kitchen Notes** for details)
- 3 tablespoons *shiro miso* (see **Kitchen Notes** for details)



**Prepare turnips:** Slice off the leafy greens. Rinse in cold water to remove sand or soil. Using kitchen twine, tie the greens into bundles keeping stem ends aligned (this will make it easier to blanch and arrange later). Peel and cut each turnip into quarter wedges.

**Flash-blanch greens:** Bring a small pot of water to a rolling boil. Blanch stem ends first until they wilt slightly, about 10 seconds. Invert and barely blanch leafy ends (5-6 seconds). Lift blanched greens from pot; BRIEFLY dip in cold water and immediately squeeze out excess moisture. Remove the string and cut the blanched greens into 1-inch (2.5 cm) length bundles. Divvy up into 4 equal portions and set aside to add to each portion of *ozōni*.



**Prepare your fresh *shiitaké* mushrooms:**



Remove the stems. Sometimes you can easily pull them away, other times you'll need a knife to slice away the stems.

Wipe the caps with a dry cloth or paper towel, removing any gritty material clinging to the caps or caught in the webbing under the caps. Slice each mushroom cap in half on the diagonal.

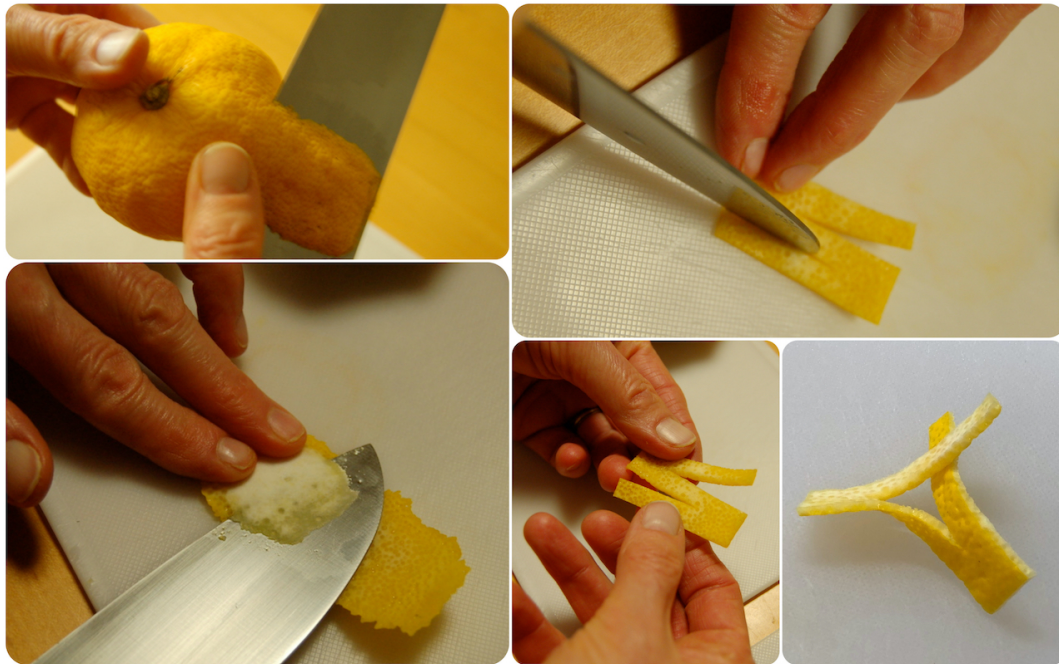




**Pour the stock into a saucepan and season** with the *usukuchi shōyu* and *mirin*. Add the mushrooms and carrots to your stock and bring to a simmer. Cook for 5 minutes or until the carrots are tender (a toothpick should meet with little resistance). Skim away any froth as it appears. Add the turnip wedges (they cook quickly even on very low heat) and keep the soup on the lowest heat possible as you finish up the other elements (decorative *yuzu* peel for garnish, softening *omochi*). You will be adding *miso* to the soup just before serving it.

**Prepare the *yuzu* (Japanese citron) or lemon peel garnish.**

Remove four broad strips of peel, each about 1-inch (2.5 cm) long. Remove any pith and trim to make a rectangle. Insert 2 slits, parallel to each other but starting from opposite ends. Depending upon how you view this, it will look like the letter N or the letter Z. Take the two open ends of the peel and twist, hooking them in place.



**Soften the *omochi*...**

Bring several inches of water to a simmer in a wide, shallow pot. Remove the pot from the stove and place *omochi* pieces (squares or rounds) in the pot in a single layer. Cover the pot and let sit for 2 minutes. Return the pot to the stove, uncovered, over low heat and bring to barely a simmer. Remove the pot from the stove, cover, and let sit for another minute or two. Test the *omochi* by pinching with chopsticks – it should give easily. If not, repeat the hot water soak in a covered pot.



You now have all the elements you need to assemble and serve the *ozōni*:

- softened *omochi*
- *shiitaké* mushrooms, carrots, turnips simmered in broth
- flash-blanching leafy greens (turnip tops)
- decorative *yuzu* peel for garnish

Have 4 bowls ready to fill. The Japanese have special lidded lacquered bowls called *zōni wan* for serving this meal-in-a-bowl. Most are rather shallow and squat in shape but you could use any shallow, wide soup bowl instead. Because the broth tends to cool rapidly if the bowl is not lidded, you may want to preheat a ceramic or china bowl by pouring boiling water in the empty bowl, discarding just before filling it with soup ingredients and broth.



Arrange a single piece of soft *omochi* in each bowl. Remove the carrot slices, turnip wedges and *shiitaké* mushrooms from the pot with the broth. Arrange pieces of vegetables and mushroom on the *omochi* with a bundle of turnip greens.

Take some of the hot broth you left simmering earlier and mix it in a small bowl with 3 tablespoons of Saikyo shiro miso, a pale, creamy-textured, slightly sweet *miso* paste. Stir to dissolve the *miso* in the bowl before adding this *miso*-thickened broth back in to the pot. Heat the soup thoroughly but do not let it come to a boil (extreme heat will destroy nutrients and dull the aroma of the *miso*). Carefully ladle the *miso*-enriched soup over and around the contents of each bowl, re-lid and serve piping hot.



Top each serving with a decorative *yuzu* or lemon peel “pine needle.” If you have lidded bowls, place the lid over each filled bowl before serving.

## Kitchen Notes

For information about OMOCHI rice taffy, download a reference sheet from my site:  
<https://tasteofculture.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/12/About-OMOCHI.pdf>

For information on preparing and enjoying OMOCHI, download this reference sheet:  
<https://tasteofculture.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/12/Preparing-and-Enjoying-omo-mochi.pdf>

Most families in the Kansai will use a standard sea stock made from *kombu* and *katsuo-bushi* fish flakes. You can download a recipe from my site:

<https://tasteofculture.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/08/Standard-Sea-Stock-Smoky-Sea-Stock.pdf>

But if you prefer, you can make the dish vegan by substituting mushroom-and-kelp *Sankai Dashi*. You can download a recipe from my site:

<https://tasteofculture.com/wp-content/uploads/2021/10/SANKAI-DASHI-2021.pdf>



*Saikyo shiro miso* 西京白味噌 is pale, creamy and very sweet, with caramel overtones. It is used in making confectionary and flavored sauces. When used to thicken soup, it is often combined with other *miso* pastes to balance sweet and salty overtones. Many commercially available brands sold outside Japan, a sampling pictured above. Natives of Shikoku and the Kansai region, particularly those who grew up in Kyoto and Nara are especially partial to *Saikyo miso*. The name refers to the “western capital,” or Kyoto, formerly the seat of power in Japan.