

GINGAMI MUSHI 銀紙蒸し (Fish & Mushrooms Steamed in Silver Boats)



Serves 4.

Steaming fish in foil is a simple, neat way to produce a substantial dish, low in calories, high in nutrients, and packed with flavor.

INGREDIENTS:

4 small fillets of fresh salmon, each about 110 grams/4oz
4 sheets aluminum foil, each about 15-18 cm square
4 pieces of *kombu* (kelp), preferably flat *ma* or *Rausu kombu*, each about 6-8 cm long
1pkg. *hon shiméji* (grey "pearl" mushrooms) AND/OR
1pkg. *maitaké* (grey "ruffled" mushrooms) AND/OR
1pkg. *enokidaké* (slender white, with tiny caps)
2 tablespoons *saké* (rice wine) + pinch of salt
1 slender scallion, minced AND/OR 4 wedges of lemon or lime (OPTIONAL)
soy sauce, at table (OPTIONAL)

PROCEDURE:

Its best when each piece of dish is 1-2 cm thick and 6-8 cm long with skin on one side, flesh on the other. Rinse the pieces of fish in cold water and pat dry with paper towels (pre-cut fish is often dipped in a saline solution before packaging for sale).

Make 4 "silver boat" packages with fish and mushrooms enclosed in foil: Lay a piece of foil, shiny side up, on your cutting board or kitchen countertop. Place one piece of kelp in the center of each piece of foil. Lay a piece of fish, skin side down, over the kelp. Trim mushrooms, then divide them into 4 portions. Arrange a portion of mushrooms over each piece of fish. Moisten each set-up with 1/2 tablespoon *saké*, then sprinkle each with a pinch of salt.





Bring the ends of the foil up and together, crimping edges to make a "boat." These boats can be assembled hours ahead and kept on a tray in the refrigerator until ready to steam.

When ready to cook and serve, place the packets in a steamer with 5cm/2inches water in the bottom. Cover, and over medium heat, bring the water in the bottom of your steamer to a boil. Adjust to maintain a steady simmer and steam the fish for 5 minutes. To check for doneness, carefully remove the lid and open one of the packets with tongs, peeking inside to see if the fish is opaque. The fish should also feel firm when touched with chopsticks.

Remove the steamer from the stove; replace the lid and allow the fish to self-steam (the Japanese call this *murasu*) for another 2-3 minutes.

Serve piping hot (on pre-heated plates if you like). Just before eating, each person opens his/her own packet with tongs. Fragrant steam will escape (be careful not to burn yourself). Add a squeeze of lemon juice and/or dribble of soy sauce. The fish is lightly salted before steaming and as such is quite flavorful without the addition of soy sauce, though some may find that salt alone is too mild.



Eat directly from the packet, leaving the skin and any bones, and kelp behind.

