



JUNSAI (water shield; *Brasenia schreberi*) grows naturally in lakes, ponds and slow streams in many parts of the world but only Japan and China have a long history of cultivating the plant as a food. Young, unfurled sprouts covered in slippery, transparent jelly, are especially prized by the Japanese.

Junsai is available in Japan in many supermarkets and department store food halls in both bottles and pouches. Outside Japan, look for *junsai* in Asian grocery stores (in some countries it may be available online).

Here are some general guidelines for preparing *junsai* to use in a variety of dishes.

PREPPING JUNSAI

じゅんさいの下ごしらえ

Drain the *junsai* discarding the liquid from the package or bottle. Rinse gently in cold tap water, being careful not to wash away the jelly. Drain. Bring fresh water to a rolling boil and briefly blanch the *junsai* until the sprouts turn green. With a fine mesh skimmer remove the *junsai* to a bowl of ice water to stop the cooking process.



When chilled, drain the *junsai* and eat as is, or use according to recipe instructions. Store any left-over *junsai* in a covered glass jar for up to 2 days in the refrigerator.