



Treasure Filled (Chicken) Stuffed Mushrooms ***Horai-Zumé*** 宝来詰め

Makes 1 dozen bite-sized pieces.

Stuffing:

- 150-200 grams ground chicken, preferably dark meat
- 1 teaspoon *Saikyo shiro miso* (light, sweet miso)
- 1 teaspoon finely chopped scallion
- 12 fresh, whole *shiitaké* mushrooms
- 1 teaspoon cornstarch
- 1/2 tablespoon oil

Glaze/Sauce:

- 1/2 tablespoon sugar
- 1/2 tablespoon *saké*
- 2 tablespoons *dashi* (basic sea stock)
- 1 tablespoon soy sauce

Place the stuffing ingredients in a small bowl and mix to distribute evenly. Gather the meat mixture in one hand, lift it, and throw it back with force into the bowl. Repeat this pitching action 5 or 6 times (a bit like baseball practice) until the mixture is smooth and is a cohesive mass. The mixture may be a bit sticky, pasty. Divide into 12 portions, each to be used to stuff a single mushroom.



Remove the stems from the *shiitaké* mushrooms (set them aside to enrich stock) and lightly wipe caps, dark top and light underside, to be sure no earth or other unwanted matter clings to them. Lay the caps, dark side down, on a cutting board or tray. With a clean, dry brush dipped in cornstarch, lightly dust the underside of the mushroom caps.



Using a butter knife or other flat spreading tool, take a single portion of the meat mixture and press it into one of the mushroom caps. Repeat to stuff all the mushrooms.



Heat the oil in a skillet and sear the mushroom caps, stuffed side down. Press lightly to ensure the filling clings to the mushroom cap. Sear over medium-high heat for 1 minute, undisturbed. Jiggle the pan to see if the stuffed mushrooms move easily. When they do, flip them; the meat now faces up. Press down (preferably with an *otoshi-buta* dropped lid, or a broad flexible spatula) to be sure the caps are flat. Continue to cook for 30 or 40 seconds before flipping them over again (the meat stuffing down).



Stir the sauce ingredients together and pour into the pan. Stir or gently swirl to distribute evenly. Braise the mushrooms in the foamy liquid, shaking slightly so that they glaze evenly. Cook for about 1 minute to be sure the meat is cooked through.

Remove the mushrooms to your serving dish. Return the skillet to the stove and over high heat, reduce the remaining glaze to a syrupy consistency and drizzle over the mushrooms. Serve the stuffed mushrooms hot, or at room temperature (they are a favorite tucked into *obento* lunch boxes).

