

ASIAN MARKET SOUP

Like most New Yorkers, I'm used to small grocery stores where you have to back your cart out of the aisle if someone is coming towards you looking for peanut butter. So, when I'm in the burbs, I'm always astonished by the sheer volume of food on the shelves, not to mention the wide aisles that seem large enough to fit a Buick.

Today we happened upon an enormous Asian market in Westbury—99 Ranch market. OMG! It had every kind of Asian ingredient you could imagine, including fresh produce, fresh noodles and a pick your own fish ball bin. I went a little nuts and came home with an eclectic mix of things. What to do, what to do? When in doubt, make soup!

INGREDIENTS (serves 6-8)

3 dashi packets

3 quarts water

2 Tablespoons miso paste

1 tablespoon mirin

1 tablespoon soy sauce

1 tablespoon sugar

2 teaspoons fish sauce

2 teaspoons chili/garlic sauce

2 teaspoons hoisin sauce

1 Tablespoon canola oil

2 cloves garlic, sliced

1 maitake mushroom, chopped

3 dried Chinese mushrooms, re-hydrated and sliced

2 baby bok choy, chopped

1 dozen fish balls

$\frac{1}{2}$ pound fresh noodles

1 scallion, chopped for garnish

Dried shallots for garnish

PREPARATION

In a large pot, combine the dashi packets and water. Bring to a boil. Add the miso paste, mirin, soy sauce, sugar, fish sauce and chili/garlic sauce. Stir until miso is dissolved.

In a large skillet, heat oil. Add garlic, mushrooms and bok choy. Sauté until wilted, about 2-3 minutes, then add to the soup.

Add in fish balls and bring back to a boil, then put on low heat for ten minutes. Remove dashi packets. Add the noodles and cook as per box/bag instructions.

Serve in large bowls and garnish with scallions and dried shallots.