

Let's Cook and Eat the Tastes of the Season!

— Simmered Eggplant (*Nasu no Nibitashi*) —

Vegetables that come into season in summer are collectively called *natsu yasai*, literally meaning summer vegetables. They include cucumbers, tomatoes, corn, and edamame (green soy beans), but perhaps the most commonly eaten vegetable of them all is eggplant. After all, it can be simmered, stir-fried, fried and pickled, and used to make a variety of dishes.

Eggplant comes into season from summer to autumn, but many people in Japan mistakenly assume that eggplant is an autumn vegetable because of an ancient proverb, "*Akinasu wa yome ni kuwasuna*," which literally means, "Don't let your daughter-in-law eat your autumn eggplants." The original meaning of this proverb is not clearly known today, but it is generally used to mean that autumn eggplants are so delicious that it is a shame to share them with one's daughter-in-law, as an expression of a mother-in-law's unfriendly attitude toward her daughter-in-law, and also as an expression of how delicious autumn eggplant is. In direct contrast to this, the proverb is also said to teach a lesson that a mother-in-law should not let her precious daughter-in-law eat autumn eggplant because eggplant chills the body. Indeed, eggplant does have the effect of lowering body temperature.

At any rate, since eggplant is said to be too delicious to share with others and even has the effect of lowering body temperature, it is indeed the ideal ingredient for summer. Below we introduce a recipe for *nasu no nibitashi*, or simmered eggplant. This typical Japanese dish can be eaten freshly made, of course, but since it can also be eaten chilled, it is a perfect dish to dispel the midsummer heat.

[Ingredients (two servings)]

3 eggplants Vegetable oil 300 ml water
2 Tbsp soy sauce 2 Tbsp mirin cooking sake
3g bonito flakes Ginger

[Preparation]

1. Remove the hull from the eggplants and, if long, cut them in two to three pieces. Cut the pieces in half lengthwise and make a number of shallow slits diagonally in the skin.
 2. Heat some oil in a pan and lightly brown the eggplant.
 3. Add water, soy sauce, mirin cooking sake and bonito flakes to the pan and simmer at medium heat.
 4. Turn off the heat when the eggplant becomes soft. By letting it cool on its own or by chilling it in the refrigerator, the flavor will seep through and offer an even more delicious taste. Place the eggplant in a serving dish and garnish with grated or julienned ginger.
- ※The ginger can be added to the pan in step 3. Fried tofu, dried shrimp, or red pepper can also be added to the eggplant before simmering for an even more savory taste.

There was an error in the article "Let's Cook and Eat the Tastes of the Season! – Goya Champuru" in the July issue. We apologize for the mistake.

(P. 37 [Ingredients] List)

Incorrect : 1 Tbsp sake



Correct : 2 Tbsp sake

食べよう！ 作ろう！ 旬の味

— なすの煮浸し —

夏に旬を迎える野菜を総称して「夏野菜」と呼びます。きゅうり、トマト、とうもろこし、えだまめなどがそうですが、夏野菜の中でも特に大活躍なのがなすではないでしょうか。なにしろ煮物、炒め物、揚げ物、漬物と様々な料理に使えます。

なすの旬は夏から秋にかけてですが、日本では、昔から「秋茄子は嫁に食わずな」ということわざがあるため「なすの旬は秋だけ」と思い込んでいる人もいます。さてこのことわざですが、現在では本来の意味がよく分からなくなってしまいました。

一般的には「秋のなすは美味しいので嫁に食べさせるのは惜しい」という姑の嫁への意地悪、またそれほど秋茄子は美味しいということを表しているとされています。一方で「なすを食べると体が冷えるので大事な嫁に食べさせてはいけない」と、前述と全く違う教訓を示しているとも言われます。実際に、なすには体を冷やす効果があるそうです。

つまりは他の人に食べさせたくないほど美味しいなすは、体を冷やす効果もあるということなので、夏にはピッタリの食材と言えるのではないでしょうか。今回ご紹介するなすの煮浸しは作りたてを食べてもいいのですが、冷やして食べても美味しく、まさに盛夏にふさわしい和食の一品です。

[材料 (2人分)]

なす…3本 油…適量 水…300ml 醤油…大さじ2 みりん…大さじ2 かつおぶし…3g しょうが…適量

[作り方]

1. なすはへたを取って、長い場合は2、3等分にした後、縦半分に切り、皮に斜めの切込みを何本か入れる。
2. 鍋に油をひき、1を軽く焼く。
3. 2に水、醤油、みりん、かつおぶしを入れ、中火で煮る。
4. なすが柔らかくなればできあがりだが、粗熱が取れてから、更に冷蔵庫で冷やしてから食べた方が、なすに味がしみこんでいて美味しい。器に盛って上からおろししょうがを千切りしょうがをかける。

※しょうがは3で入れても構いません。また油揚げや干しエビ、赤唐辛子を入れて煮ると更に良い味が出ます。

〈日本語できるかなの答え〉

- ①くるま/じどうしゃ②じてんしゃ③でんしゃ