

Lotus Root Cloaked in Fava Bean Sauce

蓮根のひばり和え **RENKON no HIBARI AÉ**



4 portions

6-8 ounces *sora mamé* (fresh fava beans), about 40 beans after shelling
1/4 teaspoon coarse sea salt (preferably *ara-jio*), or kosher salt
1 teaspoon *mirin* (syrupy rice wine)
1 teaspoon *usukuchi shōyu* (light-colored soy sauce)
6-8 ounces *renkon* (lotus root), peeled, thinly sliced and soaked in water to which a few drops of vinegar have been added

Make a small slit in the outer “skin” of each of the shelled fava beans; the slit must be made on the side that does NOT have the black line (where the bean had been attached to the pod). This slit will make it easy to remove this skin after blanching the beans.

Bring a large pot of water to a rolling boil and add the beans. To make the water return to a boil more quickly, and to heighten color and flavor of the beans, add salt to the pot. Cook the beans for 2 minutes.

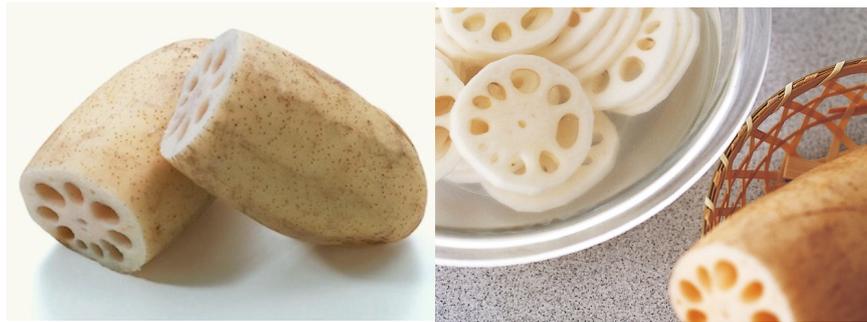
Drain the beans and cool them rapidly to preserve their color. Use either an *uchiwa* (flat fan), a stiff piece of cardboard, or place them in front of an electric fan. But, DO NOT cool by submerging them in ice water, as they will lose a great deal of flavor that way.



Lightly pinch each bean on the black line end (the opposite end that you slit). The bean will slide out of its skin easily. Continue, one at a time, to remove the thin skins before transferring the beans to the bowl of a food processor. Pulse-process the beans until they are well crushed. Between pulses, scrape down the sides of the bowl to be sure that all the beans are being crushed. Drizzle in the syrupy rice wine and light-colored soy sauce through the feeder tube and continue to pulse-process until well blended. Scrape down sides between pulses, if necessary. The finished sauce should have small bits of bean evenly scattered throughout; the sauce will form a mass easily when pressed with a spoon. In the old-fashioned kitchen, the blanched and skinned beans were sieved through an *uragoshi* strainer to mash them.



In a separate pot bring water to a boil. Add a few drops of vinegar (to help keep the lotus root slices white). Add the lotus root slices and cook just until the water returns to a boil. In a large amount of froth forms on the surface, skim it off before draining the lotus root. Do not cool the lotus root by submerging it in ice water (the lotus root will lose a great deal of flavor and crispness that way).



Cool the lotus root rapidly using either an *uchiwa* (flat fan), a stiff piece of cardboard, or place the drained slices in front of an electric fan.

Toss the drained lotus root in the green fava bean sauce. Mound and serve at room temperature, or chill.

