

Sora Mamé Gohan

そら豆ご飯

Rice Cooked with Fava Beans

(variation of recipe on page 142, WASHOKU)



This rice dish makes use of FRESH FAVA BEANS (*sora mamé*) that are briefly blanched, then steeped in a smoky sea stock. That stock is then used, instead of water, to cook the rice. The beans are added back to the cooked rice just before serving. A sprinkling of black sesame and salt is often added as a finishing touch.

Serves 4.

2 scant cups (raw) rice

7 ounces/200 grams *sora mamé* (fresh fava beans), about 40 beans after shelling

1/4 teaspoon coarse sea salt (preferably *ara-jio*), or kosher salt

2 generous cups *dashi*, preferably *oigatsuo dashi* (smoky sea stock)

1 tablespoon *mirin* (syrupy rice wine)

2 teaspoons *usukuchi shōyu* (light-colored soy sauce)

1 teaspoon regular soy sauce

optional garnish:

1 teaspoon *Goma Shio* (Toasted Black Sesame and Sea Salt mixture)



Wash and drain the rice. Allow the rice to drain for at least 20 minutes (and up to several hours) until it is opaque -- that tells you the grains of rice have already absorbed moisture.

Moist rice will absorb more of the flavorings from the liquid, and become tender without stickiness.

Place the *oigatsuo dashi* (smoky sea stock) in a small saucepan; season with *mirin*, *usukuchi shōyu* and regular soy sauce. Bring the seasoned liquid to a simmer and set aside while you prepare the fava beans (*sora mamé*),

Prepare the fava beans:

Shell the beans and make a small slit in the outer "skin" of each. Slit 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 the skin after blanching the beans.





Pinching end to release cooked beans; place in seasoned liquid

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 1 and 1/2 minutes.

Drain the beans but **DO NOT** “refresh” them in cold or icy water, as they will lose a great deal of flavor that way. Once they are cool enough to handle comfortably, remove the inner skins. 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.

Transfer the skinless *sora mamé* to the seasoned liquid; let steep for at least 5 minutes and up to several hours (refrigerated). Strain and reserve the *sora mamé* and liquid, separately. If need be, add more stock or plain water to the seasoned liquid to make a generous 2 cups; this is the flavored liquid that will be used to cook the rice.



Seasoned liquid poured into rice cooker (above)

Place the washed-and-drained raw rice in the bowl of a rice cooker. Add the strained seasoned liquid and press the “start” button. Or, cook in a stovetop pot: follow instructions on page 142 of WASHOKU. Allow the cooked rice to self-steam for at least 10 minutes and preferably 15 to 20.

Return the cooked *sora mamé* to the rice cooker or pot. With light cutting motions, mix the cooked *sora mamé* into the rice. When you scrape up the bottom, there is likely to be some *okogé* “crust.” Just before serving, sprinkle with black sesame and salt mixture (*Goma Shio*). Serve hot, or at room temperature.

