

Teapot-Steamed Mushrooms, Vegan-Style (*Dobin Mushi Shōjin-fu*)

土瓶蒸し精進風



(Serves 4 to 6.)

Named after the teapot-shaped vessel, *dobin*, in which it is served, this style of steam-poaching traps aromatic vapors, transforming them into an intensely flavored liquid. That broth is then enjoyed with the ingredients that produced it.

The vessels are sold at many Asian grocery stores, and make a charming addition to your tableware collection. But if you cannot find them (or the space to store them in your kitchen) similar results can be achieved by using 1-cup capacity, porcelain soufflé dishes (use parchment to cover during steaming).

The most extravagant *dobin mushi* is made with autumnal *matsutaké* mushrooms, though other mushrooms (preferably a variety to obtain complex flavor) can be used. Often some plant-based protein such as frozen-thawed-and-pressed *shimi-dōfu* is added. See the final page of this document and page 164 of [KANSHA](#) for more information on *shimi-dōfu*.

Prepare a rich kelp broth:

If you can source one or more high-glutamate varieties of kelp such as *Rausu kombu*, *ma kombu*, and/or *Rishiri kombu* you will be well-rewarded for your trouble. If not, all-purpose *Hidaka kombu* is fine. Cut the *kombu* into 4 or 6 small pieces (about 1 and 1/2 inches square). Place the pieces of *kombu* in a glass jar with 3/4 cup tap water and 2 tablespoons *saké*. Set aside for at least 20 minutes and up to several hours, at room temperature. This becomes a flavorful kelp broth.

Place ingredients (kelp broth, *shimi-dōfu*, and mushrooms) in the *dobin* pot:

Begin by lining each of four to six *dobin* pots or soufflé dishes with one of the pieces of *kombu* (the pieces will have expanded slightly; if need be, fold over or trim with scissors and layer to fit into the *dobin* pot).

Next, add several chunks of *shimi-dōfu* to each pot.

Prepare the mushrooms: One small (half-ounce) *matsutaké* can be stretched into four or more portions. Clean (wipe with paper towels) and trim (whittle stem end to get rid of any gritty matter). With a knife, cut the mushroom in two about 1/2-inch below the cap. Hand-shred the stem section; slice the cap into thin pieces. Toss with a splash of *saké* to just moisten the mushroom bits and then sprinkle with a pinch of salt. Divide the stem pieces among the dishes, placing attractive cap slices on top of each portion.

Sprinkle the *shimi-dōfu* chunks with a pinch of salt and a splash of *saké*. Add 2-3 tablespoons of broth (from soaking the kelp) to each *dobin* pot or dish. Have a sprig of *mitsuba* (trefoil) or watercress (for each portion) ready to add at the end.

Cover each *dobin* pot with its lid. Or, cover each dish with cooking parchment (tie in place with kitchen twine to insure vapors will not escape). Do not use foil, as it often imparts an unwanted metallic odor.

Steam-poaching:

Place the individual *dobin* pots or soufflé dishes in a flat-bottomed steamer. Cover and cook for just 2 minutes (begin timing when a steady flow of steam is emitted). With hands protected by potholder gloves or a thick towel carefully remove the cover of your steamer. Remove the *dobin* pots by their handles or use tongs to grasp the soufflé dishes.



Set each soufflé cup on a serving dish (much like a cup on a saucer), placing a wedge of *sudachi* lime (Meyer lemons and Key limes also provide fine flavor) to the side. Soy sauce for drizzling should be at the table. Serve immediately.

Eating... Enjoying...



To enjoy, lift the lid of the *dobin* teapot and add a squeeze of lime. Re-lid and pour the broth into the small *saké*-cup that sat upon the lid, upside down, when the dish was first presented. Sip and savor. When ready, lift the pot's lid again and nibble the tidbits inside.

If you used soufflé cups, rather than a classic *dobin* pot, each person carefully removes the parchment or plastic wrap (unpeel from front to back to savor aromas and protect hands from injury with heat), squeezes some citrus juice over the mushrooms and *shimi-dōfu*. Drizzle a few drops of soy sauce over all. Begin by savoring the aroma, then nibbling the mushrooms, *tōfu* and *mitsuba* or watercress, drinking the warm broth last.

凍み豆腐 frozen-thawed-and-pressed *shimi-dōfu* (pg 164 KANSHA)



Freeze TUBS of TŌFU (unopened packages with their liquid) for at least 12 hours (up to 3 days). MOMEN-DŌFU is pictured above; KINUGOSHI-DŌFU can also be used.



Defrost slightly and cut into chunks.

Allow the *shimi-dōfu* to thaw completely in the refrigerator or cool kitchen shelf.

Press and drain off excess liquid. The appearance is more layered; the texture of the *tōfu* has also changed. It becomes chewy and a bit sponge-like (it will absorb flavors from the foods with which it is cooked).



**NEVER
RE-FREEZE!**