

Japanese Simmered Kabocha

Cooked in savory dashi broth seasoned with soy sauce and sake, this classic Japanese Simmered Kabocha Squash makes a satisfying and healthy side dish that is chock-full of nutrients. {vegan/vegetarian adaptable}

Prep Time	Cook Time	Resting Time	Total Time
15 mins	30 mins	30 mins	1 hr 15 mins



★★★★★
4.80 from 121 votes

Course: Side Dish **Cuisine:** Japanese **Keyword:** kabocha, nimono
Servings: 4 (as side dish) **Calories:** 51kcal **Author:** Namiko Chen

Ingredients

- 454 g kabocha squash (½ small kabocha)

For the Dashi

- 400 ml water
- 6 g katsuobushi (dried bonito flakes) (skip for vegan/vegetarian and make Vegan Dashi with shiitake and kombu)

For the Seasonings

- 2 Tbsp sake
- 1 Tbsp sugar
- 2 tsp soy sauce
- ⅛ tsp Diamond Crystal kosher salt

For the Garnish (optional)

- ginger (julienned; from 1-inch, 2.5-cm knob)

Instructions

1. Gather all the ingredients.
2. In a small saucepan, boil **400 ml water** for the dashi. Once boiling, add **6 g katsuobushi (dried bonito flakes)**.
3. Mix together and turn off the heat. Set aside for 15 minutes. Then, strain the katsuobushi with a fine-mesh sieve. Now you have *Katsuo Dashi*. Set it aside for now. Reserve the spent katsuobushi to make *furikake* (rice seasonings).
4. Remove the seeds and membrane from **454 g kabocha squash** and microwave it for 2 minutes to soften the outer skin. You can skip microwaving if you have a sharp knife and the strength to cut through the hard kabocha.
5. Carefully cut the kabocha into wedges, then equal 2-inch (5 cm) pieces. Remember, we leave the skin on

because kabocha skin is edible and nutritious.

6. In a large pot, place the kabocha pieces in a single layer, skin side down.
7. Add the dashi, **2 Tbsp sake**, and **1 Tbsp sugar**. **Tip:** Swirl the pot to mix the seasonings so you don't break the kabocha pieces.
8. Cook on medium high heat and bring it to a boil.
9. Add **2 tsp soy sauce** and **1/8 tsp Diamond Crystal kosher salt**, and swirl the pot again to mix the seasonings. The cooking liquid should come three-quarters up the sides of the kabocha pieces; if it does not, you can add a little bit of water. Bring it to a boil again.
10. Once boiling, turn the heat to medium low to maintain a simmer. Cover with an *otoshibuta* (drop lid) and cook for 20–30 minutes (depending on the size of your kabocha pieces and how long it takes the skin to cook). You can tell it's done when the orange flesh of the kabocha has tiny, thin cracks near the skin or a bamboo skewer pierces the kabocha easily. If you feel that the liquid is evaporating too fast, you can cover the pot with a pot lid (with the otoshibuta still placed on top of the kabocha).
11. Remove from the heat and let the kabocha sit covered with a pot lid until cool, about 30 minutes. This helps the kabocha absorb more flavor as it cools. You can serve it at room temperature or reheat before serving.

To Garnish (optional)

1. Cut the **ginger** into thin slabs and then thin julienne strips.
2. Soak in cold water for 1 minute to remove some of the spiciness and drain well. Sprinkle the ginger on top of the simmered kabocha and serve.

To Store

1. You can keep the leftovers in an airtight container and store in the refrigerator for 2–3 days or in the freezer for a month.

Nutrition

Calories: 51 kcal · Carbohydrates: 12 g · Protein: 1 g · Fat: 1 g · Saturated Fat: 1 g · Sodium: 85 mg · Potassium: 398 mg · Fiber: 2 g · Sugar: 4 g · Vitamin A: 1550 IU · Vitamin C: 14 mg · Calcium: 39 mg · Iron: 1 mg