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Chinese Style Clear Vegetable Soup

Ingredients

2 carrots
75g white cabbage
A small bunch of spring onions
50g canned bamboo shoots
100g baby chestnut mushrooms
A small piece of fresh ginger
A small green chilli
A fat clove of garlic
1.75 litres of good chicken stock
Salt and white pepper
2 teaspoons of toasted sesame oil
A quarter teaspoon of five spice powder
Half a small lime

Preparation

1. First prepare the vegetables. Peel then coarsely grate the carrots. Slice the cabbage into fairly short, thin strips. Trim and chop the spring onions into very small pieces. Cut the bamboo shoots into thin strips. Wipe and thinly slice the mushrooms. Peel the ginger and slice into thin matchsticks. Deseed the chilli, peel the garlic then chop both very finely.
2. Heat the chicken stock in a large saucepan, bringing it to the boil. Add the carrot and cabbage and simmer for 5 minutes.
3. Add the spring onions, bamboo shoots, mushrooms, ginger, chilli and garlic and continue to simmer gently, stirring occasionally, for about 15 minutes.
4. Season with salt to taste, depending on the saltiness of the stock, and add a generous amount of white pepper. Drop in the sesame oil, add the five spice powder and stir well. Finally, squeeze in a splash of fresh lime juice, stir and it is ready to serve.

Cooks Note

This clear vegetable soup is low in calories and extremely simple to throw together in a very short space of time, but is really tasty and full of flavour.

I enjoy eating it just as it is, but it is very adaptable; you can change the vegetables that you use, adding your favourites or anything you need to use up, such as broccoli, green beans or water chestnuts. To include carbohydrate and make it more filling, stir in some noodles. Or, if you want to include some protein, try adding thin strips of tofu, shrimps or strips of cooked chicken.