

Hot & Sour Soup

Yield: Serves 6 to 8

Your father's favorite!

1 cup pork butt, thinly sliced

Meat Marinade:

1 teaspoon soy sauce

1 teaspoon sesame oil

1 teaspoon cornstarch

1 teaspoon sherry

24 dried lily buds

5 - 6 dried oriental mushrooms

1/2 cup Szechwan pickled mustard (or *Kim Chee*)

1/2 cup canned bamboo shoots

1 bean cake (the firm Chinese variety)

1 quart chicken stock

1 1/2 teaspoon salt

1/4 - 1/2 teaspoon white pepper, ground

2 tablespoons white vinegar

2 tablespoons dark soy sauce

2 tablespoons cornstarch mixed with 2 tablespoons water

2 eggs, beaten

1/2 - 1 teaspoon hot chili oil

2 teaspoons sesame oil

Preparation: Mix meat with marinade for 15 minutes. Soak lily buds with mushrooms for 1 hour. Cut off mushroom stems and slice caps, bamboo shoots, pickled mustard and bean cakes into match size sticks. Nip off the tough ends of the lily buds and tie a knot in the middle of each.

Cooking: Bring stock to a boil. Add pork, lily buds, mushrooms, bamboo shoots, (black fungus), pickled mustard and bean cake. When stock returns to a boil, add soy sauce, white pepper, vinegar and salt. Drizzle the cornstarch/water mixture into the soup, stirring until thickened. Remove from heat, add beaten eggs and

stir slowly until eggs separate into strands. Taste to see if soup is the right degree of hot and sour and adjust seasoning by adding hot chili oil if necessary. Add sesame oil just before serving. If desired, garnish with chopped green onions.

Notes: This soup keeps well for several days, or you can make a larger batch and freeze in small containers (though you may want to dispose of the containers afterward). I add black fungus also - soak a handful with the mushrooms. All the ingredients are negotiable - some people use chicken instead of pork, and it is very hard to find pickled mustard, so you may have to use kim chee (just as disgusting). Every restaurant seems to be different. . . enjoy.