

🍴 Digestive Wellness Journey – Recipe Collection (Step 1 & 2)

A carefully curated collection of Japanese-inspired recipes designed to support digestive wellness through traditional fermented ingredients, enzyme-rich foods, and anti-inflammatory spices. Each recipe incorporates time-tested Japanese culinary wisdom to promote gut health and overall wellbeing.

Protein-Rich Main Dishes

Shio-Koji Pork Ginger Stir-Fry (塩こうじの豚の生姜焼き)

Ingredients (2 servings)

- Pork loin slices ... 200g
- Shio-koji ... 2 tbsp
- Grated ginger ... 1 tbsp

Method

1. Marinate pork with shio-koji and grated ginger for at least 1 hour (ideally half a day).
2. Heat oil in a pan, cook on medium heat (shio-koji burns easily).
3. Brown both sides and cook through.

👉 Shio-koji enzymes tenderise the meat and aid digestion.

Grilled Salmon with Homemade Ponzu & Daikon Oroshi (焼き鮭と手作りポン酢+大根おろし)

Ingredients (2 servings)

- Salmon fillets ... 2 pieces
- Daikon radish ... 5 cm (grated with a grater)
- Homemade ponzu ... 2 tbsp

Method

1. Grate daikon finely using a grater.
2. Grill or pan-fry salmon: For a grill: start skin-side down, cook 5–10 min depending on heat. Flip halfway, cook until skin is crispy and golden.
3. Top with daikon oroshi and drizzle ponzu.

Note: Sprinkle fresh salmon with salt before cooking.

👉 Daikon enzymes (amylase, protease) help break down food and improve digestion.



🍊 Homemade Ponzu Sauce Ingredients

- 150 ml fresh orange juice (3–4 oranges)
- 120 ml soy sauce
- 50 ml mirin
- 50 ml rice vinegar
- 1 tsp dashi powder or 1 small piece dried kombu

Directions

- Squeeze oranges for 150 ml juice.
- Mix juice, soy sauce, mirin, and vinegar.
- Add dashi powder or kombu.
- Keep in fridge overnight before use.



Fresh Salads & Quick Pickles

Daikon & Rocket Salad with Katsuobushi

(大根とロケットのサラダ、鰹節のせ)

Ingredients (2 servings)

- Daikon (julienned) ... 100g
- Rocket (arugula) ... 30g
- Katsuobushi flakes ... to taste

Dressing

- Flaxseed oil ... 1 tbsp
- Ume paste ... 1 tsp
- Alternative: GF soy sauce 1 tbsp + lime/lemon juice 1 tbsp
- Sesame oil ... 1/2 tsp

Method

1. Place daikon and rocket on a plate.
2. Mix dressing and pour over.
3. Top with katsuobushi.

👉 Omega-3 from flaxseed oil reduces inflammation and supports gut balance.



Quick Pickled Cucumber with Shio-Kombu

(塩昆布ときゅうりの即席漬け)

Ingredients (2 servings)

- Cucumbers ... 2
- Shio-kombu ... 1 tbsp
- Sesame oil ... 1 tsp
- Dashi powder ... a pinch

Method

1. Smash cucumbers and cut into bite-sized pieces.
2. Mix with shio-kombu, sesame oil, and dashi powder.
3. Rest 5–10 min before serving.

👉 Fermented shio-kombu supports healthy gut microbiota.



Nourishing Grains & Beverages

Turmeric Rice with Japanese Rice & Tri-Colour Quinoa (ターメリックライス)

Ingredients (2 servings)

- Japanese rice ... 150g (3 parts)
- Tri-colour quinoa ... 50g (1 part)
- Turmeric powder ... 1/2 tsp
- Salt ... a pinch

Method

1. Wash rice, add quinoa (ratio 3:1).
2. Add turmeric and salt, cook in rice cooker.

👉 Turmeric (curcumin) has anti-inflammatory benefits. Quinoa is low-FODMAP and nutrient-rich.

Dandelion Chai Tea (タンポポチャイティー)

Ingredients

- Commercial dandelion chai mix (available in health food stores)
- Hot water or hot milk of choice (dairy, oat, or almond)

Method

Brew dandelion chai according to package instructions. Serve hot, either with water only or with hot milk.

Benefits

Dandelion root stimulates bile production in the liver, supporting fat digestion and detox pathways. Combined with warming spices (like cinnamon, ginger, cardamom), it enhances circulation, digestion, and gut motility.

👉 Key point: Encourages abundant bile flow, which is central to this digestive wellness programme.

🌸 Glossary of Japanese Ingredients



Koji (麹)



A type of fermentation starter made from rice inoculated with a special mould (*Aspergillus oryzae*). Koji breaks down proteins and starches, creating natural sweetness and umami. It is the base for making miso, soy sauce, sake, and shio-koji.

👉 Think of it like the "yeast" of Japanese cuisine—the hidden engine of flavour.



Dashi Powder (だしパウダー)



A convenient powdered form of dashi, the fundamental Japanese soup stock. Traditional dashi is made by gently simmering kombu (kelp) and katsuobushi (bonito flakes), rich in natural glutamates. This powder captures that savoury "umami" and can be quickly added to soups, sauces, or even pickles.

👉 Think of it as the Japanese equivalent of bouillon powder, but lighter and full of umami.



Shio-Koji (塩こうじ)



A traditional Japanese seasoning made by fermenting rice koji with salt and water. It naturally tenderises meat and fish, whilst adding a mild, slightly sweet umami flavour. Used as a marinade, it also promotes better digestion thanks to its active enzymes.

👉 Think of it as a Japanese-style natural marinade with health benefits.



Umeboshi (梅干し)



A salted and fermented Japanese plum (closer to apricot than Western plums). It is intensely sour and salty, but also probiotic-rich, supporting digestion and gut health. Traditionally eaten with rice, but also used in dressings, sauces, and even teas.

👉 Think of it as a Japanese super-sour pickle that refreshes the palate and supports the gut.



Ponzu (ポン酢)



A refreshing Japanese sauce that combines soy sauce with citrus juice (such as yuzu, lemon, or lime) and dashi. It has a light, tangy, and slightly savoury taste that pairs well with fish, grilled meats, and salads. Ponzu balances richness in food and adds brightness to a meal.

👉 Think of it as a Japanese citrus vinaigrette.

🍊 Umeboshi — Beyond Digestion

1. Cell Protection & Apoptosis

Polyphenols in umeboshi may support apoptosis (natural cell death) in abnormal cells, helping the body's renewal system.

2. Antioxidant & Anti-Inflammatory

Reduces oxidative stress, supporting immunity, circulation, and recovery from fatigue.

3. Traditional "Natural Medicine"

Used in Japan for fatigue, nausea, hangovers; samurai carried them for food safety and stamina.

4. Modern Research

Linked to improved blood flow, liver support, and reduced risk of lifestyle diseases.



🍷 Rice Koji — Beyond Digestion

1. Cell Protection & Metabolism

Rich in enzymes and peptides that aid metabolism and may slow cellular aging.

2. Antioxidant & Anti-Inflammatory

Suppresses oxidative stress, eases inflammation, and supports vascular and immune health.

3. Traditional "Power of Fermentation"

Known as Japan's "national mold," essential for miso, soy sauce, mirin, and sake. Associated with beauty, vitality, and longevity.

4. Modern Research

Shown to improve gut microbiota (prebiotic effect), help regulate blood pressure & blood sugar, and support immune balance.



What is Mumefural?

- A unique compound created when ume (Japanese plum) is heated.

It is not found in fresh plums but is formed during the preparation of ume extract or syrup.

1. Improves Blood Flow

- Shown to **reduce platelet aggregation** (“blood thinning effect”), helping circulation.
- May lower the risk of blood clots and support cardiovascular health.

2. Supports Recovery & Warmth

- Better circulation can help with **fatigue recovery, cold sensitivity, and stiffness relief.**

3. Prevents Lifestyle Diseases

- By improving blood flow, it may reduce risks of **arteriosclerosis, stroke, and heart attack.**

4. Anti-Cancer & Antioxidant Potential

- Some studies suggest ume extracts with mumefural can **induce apoptosis in cancer cells.**
- Strong antioxidant effects may also protect against cell aging.

Key Point:

Mumefural is a **“hidden power” of ume**, created through heat, and is one of the main reasons umeboshi and ume extract are valued for health in Japan.

Ume Concentrate (Bainiku Ekisu)

Product Features

- A **30x concentrated** thick, black extract made from ume plums.
- Known as “**bainiku ekisu**”, capturing the pure essence of ume.
- Enjoy by dissolving one spoonful (about 1 g) in hot water or tea.

Production Method

- Made from Japanese green ume plums: harvested, washed, soaked, and pressed.
- The juice is **simmered for 48 hours** to create a thick concentrate.
- From 1 kg of fresh plums, only 20 g of concentrate is obtained → **30x stronger than pickled umeboshi**.
- Contains **very little sodium** compared to umeboshi.
- Sealed in amber glass jars to preserve freshness.

History & Cultural Background

- Used for over **2,000 years in China**, later brought to Japan with Buddhism.
- Records of umeboshi date back to the 10th century (Heian period).
- Developed as a way to keep ume’s benefits **without high salt content**.
- By the 1920s, the Japanese military distributed it to soldiers and sailors to prevent **dysentery and motion sickness**.

Health Benefits & Traditional Value

- Known as the “**King of Alkaline Foods**.”
- Aids digestion and acts as a **catalyst for mineral absorption**.
- Rich in citric acid, which binds with minerals in food → creating **easily absorbed organic mineral salts**.
- Traditionally valued as a **super tonic** for digestion, fatigue recovery, and maintaining balance.

How to Use

- Dissolve 1 g (using the included spoon) in hot water or tea.
- Optional: add a few drops of soy sauce.
- Can also be taken directly from the spoon.

