









TASTE KOREA

Korean recipes with local ingredients

Ae Jin Huys



Lannoo



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One of the earliest memories from my short-lived childhood in Korea is that of the earthen jars (*onggi*) in our garden. They contained homemade *jang* and I still remember often sneaking by and stealthily dipping my finger in them. And though I rediscovered this taste only many years later, I am convinced that these Korean umami flavours have strongly influenced my taste buds all this time.

With this recipe book, I want to share with others the wonder that carries me on my quest to rediscover Korean cuisine. And where else to start than with its essence, the well-known *jang* that so typifies Korean cooking. *Jang* always refers to the three most important seasonings: fermented soy sauce, soybean paste, and chilli paste (*gangjang, doenjang, gochujang*).

Over the years I have collected countless Korean recipes by tasting in numerous eateries, watching housewives at the stove, receiving teaching from many chefs and, of course, scouring the omniscient digital information network. Yet over time, progressively, I learned to develop my own personal taste and to adapt classical Korean recipes by cooking with local ingredients.

This is how the concept of my second cookbook was created: if you have one or more jars of *jang* at home, you can open this book on any humdrum evening and cook Korean. For a more festive meal, you can select specific recipes for sharing dishes and serve them Korean style. On top of that, you will find recipes from my masters – including how to make *jang* yourself, a challenge for the more experienced fermentation enthusiasts. Here I hope to pass along some of their inspiring vision and their stories, offering a view of food that differs from a mere routine pleasure or daily obligation.

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STEW OF SHIITAKE WITH FAST FERMENTED SOYBEAN PASTE

INGREDIENTS

½ packet of tofu (100-150g)
10 shiitakes
500ml water
½ onion, shredded
1 to 2 garlic cloves to taste, minced
150g fast fermented soybean paste (cheonggukjang, (see p. 24, 193))
1 to 2 tablespoons chilli powder (to your own taste)
¼ Spanish red chilli pepper
¼ Spanish green chilli pepper
pinch of salt
pinch of black pepper

PREPARATION

Drain the tofu. Remove the shiitake stems and set the mushrooms aside. Bring the water to a boil together with the shiitake stems, onion, garlic, soybean paste and chilli powder. Break the shiitake caps with your hands into bite-sized pieces into the cooking pot. Do the same with the tofu. Cut the chilli peppers into fine diagonal slices and add these at the end. Cook until everything is done and bring up to taste with some salt and pepper if needed.



BRAISED SALSIFY

INGREDIENTS

200g salsify
1 teaspoon natural
vinegar
vegetable oil, to fry

SAUCE

1 tablespoon chilli
paste
2 tablespoons soy sauce
2 tablespoons water
1 tablespoon rice syrup
(see p. 24)
1 garlic clove, minced

PREPARATION

Peel the salsify under water, rinse thoroughly until they are nice and white. Put them in a fresh water bath with vinegar to prevent discolouration. Halve the salsify lengthwise, crush with a rolling pin and cut into bite-sized 4cm pieces. Add some oil to a pan and fry briefly. Make the sauce by mixing all the ingredients and add to the pan. Stir fry until the salsify is al dente, or longer for a softer texture. Personally, I like them slightly crispy.