

BUSYCOOK

Meals in a hurry



Love apples & fish

Tomatoes, apples add fruity flavours to a salmon soup

The inspiration for this week's dish came at the sashimi counter at the supermarket in Bishan MRT.

They had just finished slicing up a large salmon, and the sashimi chef was packing this glistening salmon head onto its cling-wrapped tray.

It was just too tempting.

I had just picked up four bright red tomatoes at the organic veggie counter.

Love apples. Yep, salmon soup with tomatoes sounded good to me.

Being at the sashimi counter prompted me to think Japanese.

And that's why I decided to use miso, the smooth bean paste that goes into that famous fragrant soup.

I have to confess that faced

with huge plastic boxes of miso paste with \$6.00 to \$8.00 price tags, I almost changed my mind about using miso.

Fortunately, I spotted these little packets of miso soup mixes, *wakame shiro*, and they were \$1.95 for 10 packets.

The shelves had some Royal Gala apples on offer, and I picked up a few. Putting an apple into the soup will add to the fruity fragrance, and take away any fishy taste.

They can also be dessert, as well, later.

This is just an example of how you can quickly plan a one-dish meal for your small family, even if you are only zipping down to the supermarket after work.

Think simple. When you are looking at the bewildering selection of meats and vegetables, plan in terms of your family's favourite flavours and match-

make the ingredients according to their compatibility.

The salmon will provide the "meat", and cooking it in a rich soup allows you to just add a packet or two of udon (thick Japanese noodles) to round up the meal as a filler.

Just pour the hot soup over the udon in a smaller bowl.

It's also an easy meal that shouldn't take you more than half an hour from start to finish.

You can eat practically everything, including the soft, pulpy tomatoes and apples.

My apples were still fragrant after the cooking, and in fact, they were the first things to disappear from the dish.

The salmon head had lots of meat in it. Salmon is an oily fish, although it has the "good" Omega oils. Even then, a little goes a long way.

As usual, send any questions you may have my way.

FRUITFACTS

TOMATO A.K.A LOVE APPLE

LOCAL Singaporeans were not too far wrong when they called the tomato "ang moh kio" or "foreign fruit". It did come from far across the seas — from the South American Aztecs, who called it "tomatl".

The conquering Spaniards took it back to Europe together with their plundered gold and the fruit was enthusiastically introduced into Spanish cuisine. The neighbouring Italians, too, adopted it and it's now a major ingredient for their pasta sauces.

The Norwegians and Swedes regarded it with great suspicion, and thinking it was poisonous, called it the "wolf peach" and used it only as an ornamental plant.

But there were those who believed the tomato was an aphrodisiac and they called it the "love apple".

The tomato is a fruit, but it is eaten so often as a vegetable that it is quite universally recognised as such.

Its sweet and sour properties make it a refreshing ingredient in fish dishes or in strongly flavoured meat dishes like those using lamb or duck.

One good example is the Duck with Salted Vegetables we are so familiar with. It wouldn't taste half as good if we didn't add a tomato or two.

I like using it in fish dishes, like the salmon soup I'm writing about this week. Adding the tomatoes takes away the fishiness and gives a nice fruity tang to an otherwise rich dish.

But the best persuasion of using the bright red fruit is its nutritional value. Each large tomato has traces of protein, carbohydrate, sodium and potassium.



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Salmon with Tomatoes and Apples

Ingredients:

- 1 salmon head
- 2 red or green apples, cut into 4, cored
- 4 red tomatoes, cut into halves
- 1 small piece ginger, sliced
- 2 small packets miso soup mix (or two teaspoons miso paste)
- 2 packets udon (200 gm each)
- Canola oil, salt and pepper to taste

Method:

1. Using a little canola oil, fry the ginger slices. Add the whole salmon head to pan, brown well on both sides.
2. Add the apples and tomatoes.
3. Add the miso soup mix or paste.

4. Add four cups water, and allow to come to a boil, making sure miso is dissolved.
 5. Turn down fire and simmer till salmon is done. About 10 minutes. Salt to taste, add pepper and serve with udon noodles.
- (Total cooking time: 15 minutes. Serves four.)

Shopping Guide:

Most of the Japanese supermarkets like Daimaru or Takashimaya have salmon heads for sale. They shouldn't cost more than \$4.00. The one I used was just under \$3.50. While you are there, look out for the miso paste, sold in plastic wrapped blocks. Or you can use the miso soup mixes, like I did. Plain bean paste or taucheo work just as well, but it would taste better if you ground it to a smoother texture.

