

Chinese Hot and Sour Soup

(makes enough for 4 light meal sized servings)

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Ingredients:

- 6 dried tree ear mushrooms (also known as wood ear mushrooms)
- 6 dried black mushrooms
- 8 dried lily buds (otherwise known as golden needles)
- 1/2 cup bamboo shoots
- 3 tablespoons rice vinegar
- 2 tablespoons Chinese black vinegar
- 4 tablespoons light soy sauce
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 1 teaspoon sugar
- 2 tablespoons cornstarch
- 2 tablespoons water
- 1 tablespoon oil
- 4 ounces pork loin (optional, cooked and shredded)
- 4 cups Asian chicken stock (or regular chicken stock or vegetable chicken stock)
- 1 package tofu (cut into small pieces)
- 2 eggs (lightly beaten)
- 1 teaspoon black pepper (ground)
- 1 teaspoon white pepper (ground)
- 1 teaspoon sesame oil
- 2 teaspoons chili oil (to taste)
- 1 tablespoon chili sauce (to taste)
- 4 green onions (sliced)

Directions:

1. Soak the tree ear and black mushrooms in boiling water until softened, about 20 minutes, and shred them.
2. Soak the lily buds in warm water until softened, about 20 minutes, and shred them.
3. Cover the bamboo shoots in water, bring to a boil, drain and shred.
4. Mix the vinegars, soy sauce, salt and sugar in a bowl.
5. Mix the cornstarch into the water in a bowl.
6. Heat the oil in a large pot.
7. Add the pork, tree ear and black mushrooms, lily buds and bamboo shoots and saute for a minute.
8. Add the broth and tofu and bring to a boil.
9. Add the vinegar mixture and the cornstarch mixture and stir until it thickens.
10. Pour the eggs into the soup in a thin stream while stirring the soup.
11. Stir in the peppers, oils and chili sauce.
12. Serve garnished with green onions.