Main dishes / Japan

Cold Soba Noodle Salad

Chilled buckwheat noodles dressed in a sesame-soy tsuyu that is simultaneously salty, nutty, and bright with rice vinegar — the kind of bowl that feels like relief on a hot afternoon.

Time 30 min **Servings** 4

What you'll need.

- ☐ 100 parts Dried soba noodles (100% buckwheat or blended)
- ☐ 15 parts Soy sauce (low-sodium preferred)
- ☐ 8 parts Toasted sesame oil
- ☐ 8 parts Rice vinegar
- ☐ 6 parts Mirin or honey
- ☐ 3 parts Grated fresh ginger
- ☐ 4 parts Toasted sesame seeds and sliced spring onions

Let's make it.

01 Whisk together the soy sauce, sesame oil, rice vinegar, mirin, and grated ginger in a small bowl until fully combined. Taste and adjust: the balance should be salty from the soy, sharp from the vinegar, and with a clean sweetness from the mirin that rounds the edges. Make the dressing first so the flavours have time to meld while you cook the noodles.

02 Bring a large pot of unsalted water to a rolling boil. Add the soba noodles and cook according to package directions, usually 4–6 minutes, stirring often to prevent clumping. When al dente, drain immediately and transfer to a large bowl of ice water. Agitate the noodles with your hands for 30 seconds to remove surface starch and chill thoroughly. Drain and shake off excess water. Soba becomes gluey if allowed to sit in warm water or without rinsing.

03 Add the chilled, well-drained noodles to the dressing and toss using chopsticks or tongs, lifting and turning rather than stirring, for 1–2 minutes. Every strand should be evenly coated. Do not add all the dressing at once — start with three-quarters and add more to taste. The noodles will continue to absorb the dressing as they sit.

04 Divide the dressed noodles between chilled serving bowls or a platter. Scatter toasted sesame seeds and sliced spring onions over the top. Serve immediately — the noodles are best within 10 minutes of dressing. If making ahead, keep noodles and dressing separate and combine just before serving.

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Servings are an estimate; check quantities in the source recipe.
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