

Taiwanese Cucumber

BY TJ LEE | @CUPOFTJ

One of my favorite memories growing up in Taiwan is going to a noodle soup restaurant and getting a spread of side dishes. From cold cucumber salad to earwood mushrooms to pickled cabbage, these side dishes pair so wonderfully with a savory meal! The easiest recipe to make is a refreshing, crunchy cucumber salad. It's tangy and just the right amount of crunch! Store it in your fridge to eat as a snack or with any meal :)

TJ Lee is an actor and digital creator. She's traveled to over 52 countries and is best known for her videos showcasing cuisine around the world. With her roots in Taiwan, TJ has many series uncovering Asia's most delicious eats and you can trust she knows her Taiwanese food!

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SERVES: 4-6 **PREP TIME:** 10 minutes

INGREDIENTS

5 Persian cucumbers (about 1 lb total)
1/2 tsp kosher salt
3 cloves garlic
1/4 cup rice vinegar
2 tbsp mirin
2 tbsp granulated sugar
2 tsp toasted sesame oil
1-2 tsp chili crisp, such as Lao Gan Ma (optional)
1 tsp white sesame seeds

INSTRUCTIONS

01 Trim and cut 5 Persian cucumbers crosswise into 1/2-inch thick rounds. Place in a strainer set over or a bowl or in the sink, sprinkle with 1/2 teaspoon kosher salt, and toss to combine. Let sit for 20 minutes. Meanwhile, make the marinade.

02 Mince 3 garlic cloves (2 teaspoons) and place in a small bowl. Add 1/4 cup rice vinegar, 2 tablespoons mirin, 2 tablespoons granulated sugar, 2 teaspoons toasted sesame oil, and 1 to 2 teaspoons chili crisp if desired. Stir until the sugar is dissolved.

03 When the cucumbers are ready, rinse under cold running water. Pat dry with towels. Place the cucumbers in a large zip top bag and add the marinade. Seal the bag. Lay the bag flat in the refrigerator so the cucumbers sit in a single layer. Let the cucumbers marinate at least 4 hours or up to overnight, flipping the bag halfway through.

04 To serve, remove the cucumbers from the marinade and stack cut-side up on a serving plate; discard the remaining marinade. Garnish with 1 teaspoon white sesame seeds.

Storage: Leftover cucumber salad can be refrigerated in an airtight container for up to 3 days.