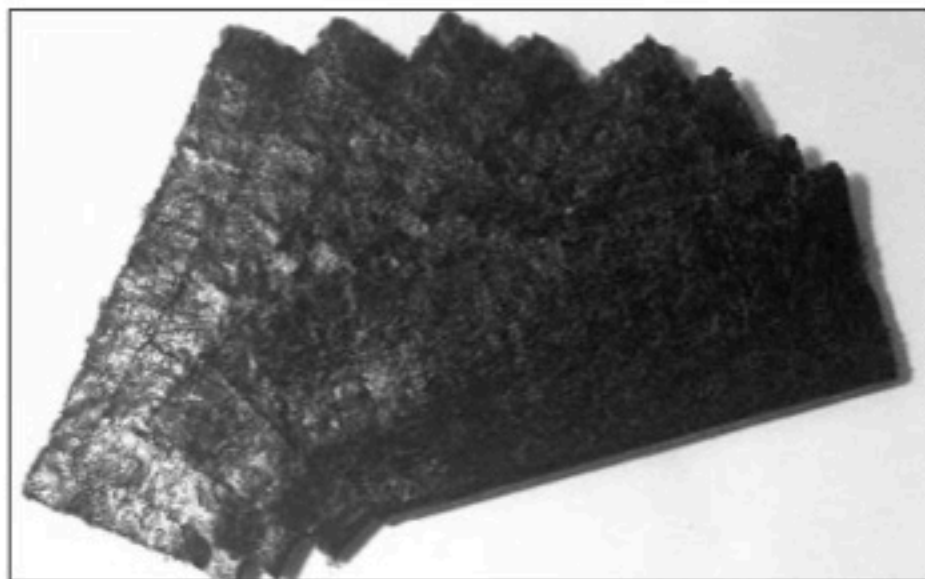


Peaceful Death Recipes

Sea Vegetable Cooking Class



Agar



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The unregenerate may know one type of sea vegetable, if they know any at all. It's the little, black, fishy-tasting strip of inner-tube-like material that holds together a piece of sushi. It's called nori, and like most other sea vegetables, it's touted by the faithful as manna, if not quite a panacea, for our many, many ills.

"Sea vegetables are seaweeds — they come from the deep parts of the sea," says macrobiotic cook and cooking teacher Mindy Goldis of Pacific

LOCAL EVENTS

Beach. "They don't float on the surface. And because they're in such deep places,

they're rich in minerals and usually aren't contaminated. The companies that sell them wouldn't harvest them here in San Diego, of course. They come from places like Mendocino and the coast of Maine."

They sound expensive — are they? "Well, not relative to other things and not if you consider the value you get out of them." Goldis is referring to the medicinal claims that are made for sea vegetables. They're purported to be good for everything from relieving constipation to regulating menstrual cycles. "Remember, too, you're buying them in their concentrated form, and you use only a small amount. So a package could last six months to a year in your kitchen cabinet."

They last, because, unlike so-called land vegetables (broccoli and rutabaga), they aren't used fresh. First sun-dried by their purveyors, they are packaged like dried spices and herbs, then reconstituted by cooks.

Hajiki (hah-gee-kee), which looks something like long, black worms, is

one of Goldis's favorite sea vegetables. Extremely high in calcium, higher than milk, it's easier to digest than milk, says Goldis. "*Hajiki* is also good for strengthening the intestines, making nice shiny hair, and purifying the blood." Still, it's among the least-used sea vegetables, even by those familiar with them.

Why the resistance? Is it the look? No. It's because its "ocean-type" flavor is strong, stronger than nori's, she says. For that reason Goldis doesn't recommend that cooks new to sea vegetables dabble with *hajiki* first.

At least, she doesn't recommend that approach without supervision. For her cooking class this weekend, Goldis will make *hajiki* caviar. The *hajiki* is soaked, then boiled for 20 minutes, after which it is added to ginger and garlic that has been sautéed in olive oil. Soy sauce finishes this appetizer.

The salad course will be made with *arame* (arr-ah-may), which comes in black lacy strands. These will be rehydrated, then mixed with finely shredded carrots, green onions, purple cabbage, and snow peas, as well as another sea vegetable — purple *dulse*. "If you're flustered by all this, you'll find *dulse* easy to use." It comes in flake form, in a shaker, and is meant to be a mineral-rich salt substitute. In addition to purple, there is also red *dulse*.

For dessert the class will sample a dish made with another seaweed that comes in flakes. Called agar (aye-gar), it's a white gelatin and has no taste of its own, but is said to be rich in iodine, calcium, iron, phosphorous, vitamins, A, B complex, C, D, and K. Goldis will use the agar to make a simple, Jell-O-like fruit dessert. "You just heat the agar in water, and it dissolves. You put the fruit into a mold, then pour the hot

agar over it." In Japan, the dish is called *kanten*.

Besides cooking publicly, Goldis cooks privately for clients. Sea vegetables are part of the macrobiotic cuisine that she prepares.

Some of her clients are people with cancer. "Many aren't sure which way to go," she says. "Some of them do Western medicine in addition to eating macrobiotically. I'm not keen on chemo, but I can't really say that to them."

Do the people undergoing chemotherapy have much of an appetite? "No, and that's a big problem. That's also one of the reasons why I'm against it. If something makes you that sick, how could it be good for you? And I hate to say it, but most of those whom I have cooked for and who have done chemo have not survived."

Goldis stops short of saying sea vegetables or anything else that comes from her kitchen is an out-and-out cure. "It's not going to 'save' you. If it's

time for you to pass on to another realm of life, then you will. People get angry. 'Well, she ate macrobiotically and died in spite of it.' But it doesn't work that way. What it can do is help some people with their pain, so they pass on in a more peaceful way. If you leave this life in pain, they say your spirit has not completed its journey and you're going to come back. So if you can help somebody achieve a more peaceful state, I think you've done a lot."

— Jeanne Schinto

**"Mermaid's Delight"
Cooking Class on
Sea Vegetables
Saturday, June 29,
10:00 a.m.-2:00 p.m.
School of Healing Arts
1001 Garnet Ave., #200
Pacific Beach
Cost: \$45 (walk-ins welcome)
Info and reservations:
858-581-9429 or 858-270-8752**



Mindy Goldis