

Sweet Soybean Milk

*Recipe submitted by Ani Weaver
Nationality/Ethnicity – Taiwan*

The Story Behind the Recipe

Taiwan's political and economic history has greatly influenced its cuisine. Located about 100 miles off the east coast of China, the country has been involved in trade with mainland China and Japan for centuries.

Most Taiwanese drink sweet soybean milk as their breakfast milk. When I grew up, my favorite breakfast combination was sweet soybean milk and a big rice ball with lots of vegetables (sort of like huge Japanese sushi). Sweet Soybean Milk and a huge rice ball play an important role of my childhood.

Soy beans play an important role in Asian cooking. The beans themselves are used, as well as flour made from dried beans, tofu made from soybean curd and soy sauce made from fermented beans. As an interesting comparison, you might have a can of soy-based infant formula for children to taste alongside this homemade preparation.

(Note: This will take a couple of days given the soaking time for the beans, so plan ahead. You also will need an electric blender and a cheesecloth bag or large piece of cheesecloth.)

Ingredients:

1 pound soybeans
2 cups sugar

Preparation Directions:

STEP 1: Put the beans in a large pot and add water. The water should be three times the amount of soybeans by volume in the pot. (If the soybeans come up to 2 inches above the bottom of the pot, the water should be an additional 6 inches above that.) Soak the beans for 12 hours.

STEP 2: Drain the beans and discard the soaking water. Add 7 cups of fresh water to the beans. Blend this bean and water mixture in an electric blender in several batches until all the beans are finely ground.

STEP 3: Place the beans and an additional 8 cups of water in a large cheesecloth bag. Squeeze out the liquid into a large saucepan and discard the bean sediment left in the bag.

STEP 4: Heat the soybean liquid over medium heat. When it begins to boil, reduce the heat to low and cook for 10 minutes. This will help remove the strong taste of the beans. Add 2 cups sugar to the milk and serve warm.