

Cook

Ramen Shop

Food at Home

dreamstime.



Recipes with love from
**The Robot Book
Club**

Cook Ramen Shop Food at Home

*Bold Broths, Creative Noodles, and American-Style Bowls in Your
Kitchen*

The Robot Book Club

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Preface

This book, and The Robot Book Club, is an experiment large scale AI generation. Every page, from layout to images to copy, was generated with zero human review.

The authoring and publishing teams were implemented in the Kaya scripting language. They were given only the input: American ramen shop food.

This is the only page authored by a human: Hello there!

— Ted Benson

Prologue

Scrub the coagulated myoglobin from split pig femurs at four in the morning. The bones go into an eighteen-hour rolling boil, a violent mechanical process that forces fat and marrow into a milky suspension. There is no shortcut to this texture, only a refractometer, a constant replenishment of evaporated water, and a shared understanding among those who have braved the lines on a rainy Tokyo night or felt the electric hum of a packed ramen-ya in Little Tokyo.

They know the reward. They've tasted the deep, cloudy richness of an 18-hour tonkotsu. They've experienced the defiant snap of perfectly alkaline noodles. They understand that a bowl requires exact chemistry, weighing alkaline salts down to the tenth of a gram to balance the hydration of the dough against the sharp salinity of the tare.

The work demands difficult techniques, from managing the precise lye water ratio to preventing a stiff dough from tearing on the pasta sheeter. The bowl breaks down into physical realities. The milky emulsion of cracked pork bones. The precise reduction of soy sauce and dried kelp that defines the tare. The strict temperature control required to melt the connective tissue in rolled pork belly, rendering a slice of chashu tender without disintegrating in the broth.

Mastering this craft means standing over a stockpot, skimming gray scum from a rolling boil for six straight hours. This is how the physical reality of the restaurant—the slippery floor and the smell of toasted fish meal—takes shape in your kitchen. The diner drains the bowl in five minutes, pays the tab, and walks out the door. In the back, the next batch of bones goes right back into the boiling pot.



Chapter 1 — The Broths: The Foundational Layer

The multi-hour projects, emulsified paitans, clear chintans, and crucial tares that form the soul of the ramen bowl.

A ramen shop lives or dies by the stockpot. These are the cauldrons bubbling in the humid, pork-scented darkness long before the first customer walks through the door. When the stockpot roars, it takes eighteen hours of violent

extraction—rolling boils that shatter split pork femurs into a milky tonkotsu—or delicate restraint, wielding a fine skimmer to coax golden clarity from a chicken chintan.

Broth alone lacks salt and sharp umami. Trading commercial darkness for a fogged-up apartment window, the home cook steeps toasted sardines in dark soy to yield a dense master shoyu tare. Before boiling one alkaline noodle, you must wait, skim, and extract gelatinous body from discarded bones to build a base of emulsified paitans, clear chintans, and dark tares.





Hakata-Style Tonkotsu

博多豚骨ラーメン

Hakata Tonkotsu Rāmen

Restaurant-quality ramen is an entirely different animal than home-cooked Japanese food; it has its own rigid, unforgiving grammar. For the cook who has killed time outside Ippudo or sat elbow-to-elbow at a Little Tokyo counter near midnight, this eighteen-hour commitment is a pilgrimage. It demands heavy bones, a violently agitated rolling boil to shatter fat into a milky emulsion, a sharply layered tare, and the firm snap of an alkaline noodle. Execute this choreography, and the very first sip will make you say yes, this is exactly what Little Tokyo tastes like.

INGREDIENTS

3 lb	pork femurs <i>split or cracked to expose marrow</i>	1 large strip	dried kelp
2 lb	pig trotters <i>split lengthwise</i>	10 ml	fish sauce
1 1/2 lb	pork neck bones	5 g	msg
1 med	onion <i>halved with skin on</i>	500 g	bread flour
1 large head	garlic <i>halved horizontally</i>	140 g	water
1 med knob	ginger <i>unpeeled and thickly sliced</i>	5 g	baked baking soda
1 bunch	scallions <i>green parts only</i>	5 g	sea salt
150 ml	light soy sauce	8 slice	chashu pork belly <i>cold-sliced 1/4-inch thick</i>
20 g	sea salt	4 large	eggs <i>marinated and halved</i>
50 ml	mirin	2 tbsp	scallions <i>thinly sliced</i>
		2 tbsp	wood-ear mushrooms <i>rehydrated and sliced</i>
		1 tbsp	pickled red ginger

PREPARATION

- **Bake baking soda to create the alkaline agent.**

Spread one cup of baking soda onto a foil-lined baking sheet and bake at 350°F for exactly one hour. The compound emerges as highly alkaline sodium carbonate, which is required to give your noodles their structural snap and yellow hue.

- **Nail the six-minute-and-thirty-second bullseye yolk.**

Lower cold eggs directly from the fridge into a rolling boil for exactly 6 minutes and 30 seconds. Instantly transfer to an ice bath to halt cooking, peel under cold running water, and submerge in diluted leftover chashu braising liquid for exactly 12 hours. Any longer, and the salt cures the yolk into rubber.

- **Braise and chill the pork belly for flawless chashu slices.**

After braising your rolled pork belly in soy sauce, sake, mirin, and aromatics until tender, chill it completely in the refrigerator overnight. Never slice the chashu warm; the delicate, rendered fats will cause the meat to shred. Cold-slicing ensures structurally intact, quarter-inch disks that will melt the moment they hit the hot soup.

INSTRUCTIONS

- 1. Purge the bones of blood and impurities.**

Place the femurs, trotters, and neck bones in a large stockpot, cover with cold water, and bring to a rapid boil for 30 minutes. Dump all the murky water, transfer the bones to the sink, and aggressively scrub away any dark, coagulated blood or gray matter under cold running water. Clean the pot thoroughly. If you skip this, the broth will turn a murky, unappetizing brown.

- 2. Execute the violent rolling boil.**

Return the pristine bones to the pot, cover entirely with fresh water, and add the onion, garlic, ginger, and scallion greens. Bring the liquid to a violently agitated rolling boil—do not simmer. The intense mechanical action is non-negotiable; it shatters the rendered fat and emulsifies it with the gelatin, transforming the liquid into a dense, opaque, milky-white suspension.

- 3. Replenish the water and scrape the cauldron.**

Keep the pot uncovered. Every hour, top up the water with a boiling kettle to keep the bones submerged; exposing them stops the extraction. Around hour six, use a heavy wooden spoon to scrape the bottom to prevent scorching, crushing the brittle bones against the pot to release the last of their deep marrow. Stop adding water in the final two hours so the liquid can reduce and thicken to coat the back of a spoon, then strain aggressively through a chinois.

1. **Construct the usukuchi tare.**

Ramen grammar dictates that seasoning lives in the tare, never the master broth. Heat the light soy sauce, salt, mirin, fish sauce, and MSG in a saucepan to 175°F. Remove from the heat, drop in the kombu, and steep overnight. Strain before using. This sharp salinity will cut through the heavy pork fat without muddying the brilliant white color.

2. **Hydrate and sheet the alkaline noodles.**

Dissolve the baked baking soda and salt into the water, then slowly drizzle the alkaline liquid into the bread flour. Mix vigorously until it resembles wet sand, place in a zip-top bag, and rest for 45 minutes to hydrate. Press the crumbly mass through a pasta machine, folding and sheeting repeatedly until completely smooth, then cut to the thinnest possible setting.

3. **Assemble the bowl with speed and rhythm.**

Preheat a ceramic bowl with boiling water, then discard the water. Add two tablespoons of the tare to the bottom, followed by a cup and a quarter of the fiercely boiling tonkotsu broth, stirring vigorously. Drop the fresh noodles into boiling water for exactly 45 seconds, violently shake off the excess moisture, and fold them into the soup. Work quickly to lay down the cold chashu, egg, scallions, wood-ear mushrooms, and pickled ginger, and serve immediately.

CHEF'S NOTES

- **Under-salt your broth, always.**

The home cook will be inevitably tempted to treat this like a Western stock and salt the pot. Resist. Rely entirely on the layered tare in the bottom of each serving bowl to season the dish.

- **Don't fear the aggressive boil.**

A clear French consommé is antithetical to what we are building here. The broth should absolutely not be clear; the violent agitation is exactly what emulsifies the fat and creates the milky-white tonkotsu signature.



Gyokai Tsukemen

豚骨魚介つけ麺

tonkotsu gyokai tsukemen

Restaurant-style ramen has its own uncompromising grammar, and this is the masterclass. We are building the infamous "Mata-oma" double-soup: a violently agitated, milky-white pork bone extraction slammed into a concentrated, smoky seafood dashi. It is thick, unapologetically rich, and clings to dense alkaline noodles like a dying man to a raft. The broth remains utterly unseasoned until it meets the heavily concentrated tare in the bowl. Do not shortcut the bone soak, do not dial back the rolling boil, and for the love of god, slice your

chashu cold. Put in the weekend, and when you finally drag a cold noodle through that hot sludge, you'll know exactly what Little Tokyo tastes like at midnight.

INGREDIENTS

1 cup	baking soda	50 g	thick-cut katsuobushi
150 ml	dark soy sauce	50 g	thick-cut sababushi
50 ml	tamari	20 g	kombu
35 ml	mirin	400 g	bread flour
25 g	sugar	140 ml	cold water
15 ml	rice vinegar	4 g	sea salt
5 tbsp	gyofun	100 g	pork belly chashu <i>braised, chilled, and diced</i>
2 lb	pork trotters <i>split down the middle</i>	8 slice	pork belly chashu <i>braised, chilled, and sliced cold</i>
2 lb	pork neck bones	4 large	eggs <i>boiled for exactly 6 minutes and 30 seconds, ice-bathed, and marinated 12 hours</i>
2 lb	pork femurs <i>cracked</i>	4 med	bamboo shoots
1 lb	chicken feet <i>nails clipped</i>	4 small	nori
1 med	onion <i>halved</i>	1 med	green onions <i>chopped</i>
1 large	garlic <i>halved</i>	4 clove	garlic <i>grated</i>
80 g	niboshi <i>heads and dark intestinal tracts removed</i>		

PREPARATION

- **Bake the baking soda.**

If you cannot source liquid kansui, spread 1 cup of standard baking soda evenly on an aluminum foil-lined baking sheet and bake at 350°F for exactly 1 hour. This chemical reaction sheds water and carbon dioxide, transforming it into sodium carbonate—a highly muscular alkali essential for noodle snap. Cool and store in a glass jar.

- **Simmer the flavor anchor.**

To make the tare, combine the dark soy sauce, tamari, mirin, sugar, rice vinegar, and 1 tablespoon of the gyofun in a saucepan. Bring to a bare simmer just until the sugar dissolves. Turn off the heat, steep, strain into a jar, and refrigerate.

- **Purge the blood.**

Place the pork trotters, neck bones, femurs, and chicken feet in a large pot, submerge them entirely in cold water, and leave them in the refrigerator overnight to draw out residual blood from the marrow cavities.

INSTRUCTIONS

1. **Blanch and scrub the bones.**

Discard the overnight soaking water, place the bones in a massive stockpot, cover with fresh cold water, and boil violently for 20 minutes to purge coagulated blood and impurities. Dump the pot into the sink, meticulously scrub every black marrow clot and piece of grey matter off the bones under cold running water, and wash the pot clean with soap.

1. Execute the rolling boil.

Return the pristine bones to the clean pot, cover with 8 liters of water, add the halved onion and garlic head, and bring to a violent, rolling boil over high heat. You must maintain this relentless agitation for 12 to 14 hours to mechanically emulsify the rendered pork fat into the water—topping off with boiling water from a kettle every hour so the temperature never drops and the emulsion doesn't break. The final result should not be clear; it must be a thick, opaque, milky-white sludge.

2. Extract the seafood essence.

In a separate pot, combine 1 1/2 liters of water (or ladled tonkotsu broth) with the cleaned niboshi, thick-cut katsuobushi, sababushi, and kombu. Heat this gently and hold it at a strict 194°F sub-simmer for 2 hours to pull the deep marine aromatics without extracting any astringent tannins.

3. Marry the double soup.

Strain the Gyokai seafood broth through a fine-mesh strainer directly into the violently boiling Tonkotsu pot and boil together for a final 15 minutes to unify. Turn off the heat and strain the entire master broth through a chinois, using a ladle to aggressively press every last drop of liquid out of the solids.

4. Engineer the alkaline noodles.

Dissolve 4g of your baked baking soda and the sea salt into the cold water, then slowly drizzle this alkaline liquid into the bread flour, mixing vigorously until it resembles wet sand. Knead aggressively, fold and run repeatedly through a pasta sheeter until completely smooth, then cut into extra-thick 2.5mm strands and dust with cornstarch.

5. Cook and shock the noodles.

Boil the noodles in a large pot of unseasoned water for 6 to 8 minutes until the core is barely translucent. Immediately transfer them to a colander and plunge them under running cold water, aggressively scrubbing them with your hands to wash away slimy surface starch and snap the gluten tight.

1. **Assemble the bowl with absolute precision.**

Preheat your serving bowls in a low oven. Into each hot bowl, add 3 tablespoons of the cold tare, a grated garlic clove, diced chashu, and a pinch of green onions, then ladle 250ml of the bubbling-hot master broth over it and whisk violently to combine. Plate the cold noodles separately, garnished with the perfect bullseye egg, cold-cut chashu, bamboo shoots, and a nori raft holding a tablespoon of fish powder to be stirred into the dip as you eat.

CHEF'S NOTES

- **Do not salt the broth.**

In ramen shop grammar, the broth is purely a vehicle for texture and fat. All salinity and primary umami belong to the heavily concentrated tare. Do not panic when the plain simmering broth tastes totally flat; let the tare do the heavy lifting in the bowl.

- **Slice your chashu completely cold.**

Never attempt to slice warm pork belly. It will disintegrate under the knife. You must chill the braised meat in the refrigerator overnight until the fat solidifies entirely, guaranteeing perfect, uniform disks.

- **Mind the 6:30 bullseye.**

Perfect ramen eggs are non-negotiable. They require exactly six minutes and thirty seconds in a rolling boil, an immediate shock in an ice bath, and a mandatory 12-hour soak in the salty marinade to draw moisture out of the yolk, curing it into a dense, jammy consistency.



Advanced Tori Paitan

鶏白湯

to-ri pai-tan

This isn't your grandmother's chicken soup. It is a chaotic, unapologetic extraction of fat and bone that demands your entire weekend. You will violently boil carcasses, you will meticulously scrape out spinal cords, and your kitchen will smell exactly like a Tokyo ramen alley at midnight. Do not salt the broth, do not drop the heat to a simmer, and trust the ruthless grammar of the shop. The reward is a sticky, opaque, lip-coating miracle that brings the late-night counter seat straight to your dining table.

INGREDIENTS

4 lb	chicken carcasses	1/3 cup	sea salt
2 lb	chicken feet <i>scrubbed and nails removed</i>	1 med piece	kombu
1 lb	chicken wings	1/4 cup	dried shiitake mushrooms
1 large	onion <i>halved with skin on</i>	2 tbsp	niboshi <i>heads and guts pinched off</i>
1 head	garlic <i>halved crosswise</i>	1 tsp	msg
2 med pieces	ginger <i>thickly sliced</i>	400 g	bread flour
1 large	leek <i>green parts only</i>	4 g	baked baking soda
2 gal	water <i>divided</i>	4 g	salt
3/4 cup	sake <i>divided</i>	4 large	cold eggs
1/2 cup	mirin <i>divided</i>	1 cup	soy sauce <i>divided</i>
		3 tbsp	sugar <i>divided</i>
		2 lb	pork belly <i>rolled and tied</i>

PREPARATION

- **Bake standard baking soda at 350F for exactly one hour to create the alkaline salt substitute.**

This thermal decomposition yields sodium carbonate, the chemical engine required for the noodles' signature yellow hue and snappy resistance to hot soup.

- **Sear the rolled pork belly and braise it in soy sauce, sake, mirin, and sugar until tender.**

Let the meat cool entirely in its braising liquid in the refrigerator overnight before attempting to cold-slice it.

- **Boil cold eggs for exactly six minutes and thirty seconds before shocking them in ice water.**

Peel and steep them in a soy-mirin marinade for twelve hours; the firm white protecting a gooey, custard-like bullseye yolk is the point.

INSTRUCTIONS

- 1. Blanch the bones aggressively in cold water then scrub them spotless under the tap.**

Discard the gray scum and meticulously clean the dark red organs from the spines to prevent a muddy, metallic broth.

- 2. Pressure cook the cleaned bones and aromatics with fresh water for ninety minutes.**

This breaks down the dense collagen in the chicken feet into gelatin; the resulting liquid will be a clear chintan topped with yellow fat.

- 3. Transfer everything to a heavy pot and maintain a violent rolling boil for two hours.**

The chaotic agitation physically tears the fat droplets and binds them with the gelatin, requiring boiling water top-ups to keep the bones submerged.

- 4. Blend the brittle bones and liquid into a gritty slushie using an immersion blender.**

This mechanical violence forces the final stubborn fat into the emulsion and extracts the absolute last bit of marrow.

- 5. Force the slurry through a fine-mesh strainer and press aggressively to extract the liquid.**

Discard the dry solids; what remains should look like melted vanilla ice cream, dense and entirely unseasoned.

- 6. Build the tare by steeping the aromatics, kombu, and niboshi before simmering and dissolving the salt and MSG.**

Never salt the broth directly; the tare is the concentrated soul of the bowl and must be crafted separately to preserve the milky-white visual.

1. Mix the alkaline water into the flour to form damp sand then sheet and cut the noodles.

Step on the bagged dough to bring it together, then pass it repeatedly through a pasta machine until perfectly smooth.

2. Assemble the bowl with warm tare, hot broth, freshly boiled noodles, and cold toppings.

Crown with cold-sliced chashu and a halved egg, serving immediately before the alkaline noodles soften.

CHEF'S NOTES

- **Never warm-slice the chashu.**

The collagen web within the braised meat dissolves into gelatin; slicing it before it chills completely overnight will cause it to disintegrate into shreds.

- **A true paitan must never be clear.**

If your broth lacks that signature milky-white opacity, the boil was not aggressive enough or you skimped on the chicken feet, failing to build a proper emulsion.



New Wave Shio Double-Soup

進化系塩Wスープ

shinkakei shio daburu-sūpu

To understand restaurant-level ramen is to surrender to its uncompromising rhythm. This bowl is not a weeknight dinner; it is an engineering project demanding your weekend, your biggest stock pot, and a profound respect for the grammar of the craft. We isolate the violently emulsified, milky-white pork and chicken broth from the thermally delicate seafood extraction, uniting them only at the absolute last second over an intensely layered scallop salt tare. When you pull that first snappy alkaline noodle through the fat and lift the spoon, it is a revelation—the exact midnight taste of Little Tokyo, rendered right in your own kitchen.

INGREDIENTS

3 lb	pork neck bones	100 ml	usukuchi soy sauce
2 lb	split pork trotters	1/2 tsp	sugar
2 lb	chicken backs	120 g	kosher salt
2 med	medium onions <i>halved</i>	500 g	bread flour
1 large	head garlic <i>halved</i>	190 ml	water
2 inch	fresh ginger <i>sliced</i>	1 tsp	kosher salt
25 g	dried kombu	6 g	baking soda <i>baked at 350°F for 1 hour to create sodium carbonate</i>
50 g	dried scallops	1 bunch	scallions <i>finely minced</i>
80 g	niboshi <i>heads and guts removed</i>	2 large	garlic cloves <i>minced</i>
60 g	katsuobushi	1 lb	braised pork belly chashu <i>chilled overnight and cold-sliced</i>
10 g	dried shiitake mushrooms	4 large	large eggs <i>boiled exactly 6 minutes 30 seconds, shocked in ice, and marinated 12 hours</i>
100 ml	mirin		

PREPARATION

- **Synthesize kansui with baked baking soda.**

Spread standard baking soda on an aluminum foil-lined baking sheet and bake at 350°F for exactly one hour to thermally decompose it into sodium carbonate, creating the necessary alkaline environment for snappy noodles.

- **Execute the 6:30 bullseye egg.**

Lower cold eggs into rapidly boiling water for precisely 6 minutes and 30 seconds, immediately transfer to an ice bath to arrest thermal carryover, peel, and submerge in a marinade for exactly 12 hours—no more, no less.

INSTRUCTIONS

1. **Craft the hotate shio tare in advance.**

Extract 10g of the kombu and all of the dried scallops in 500ml of water at 140°F. Raise the heat to 175°F to steep 40g of niboshi for 10 minutes, strain, then steep 30g of katsuobushi for 3 minutes and strain again. Briefly boil the mirin in a separate pan to remove the alcohol, then whisk in the soy sauce, sugar, seafood liquor, and 120g of salt until fully dissolved, resting it in the refrigerator to age and mellow over a few days.

2. **Blanch the animal bones to purge impurities.**

Place the pork neck, trotters, and chicken backs in your largest stock pot, cover with cold water, and bring to a violent boil for 15 minutes. Dump the entire contents into the sink and mercilessly scrub every single bone under cold running water to remove coagulated blood—skipping this guarantees a muddy, oxidized broth.

3. **Violently emulsify the animal broth over an 18-hour boil.**

Return the pristine bones to the cleaned pot, cover with two inches of water, and establish a thrashing, rolling boil. After two hours, add the onions, halved garlic, and ginger; replenish evaporating water only with boiling water from a kettle so the agitation never drops. This mechanical violence is entirely responsible for shearing the fat and gelatin into the opaque, milky-white suspension that defines the broth.

4. **Render the aroma oil.**

Skim half a cup of the solidified fat from the chilled animal broth and gently fry the minced scallions and garlic until deeply golden, straining and reserving the infused fat.

1. Extract the delicate seafood broth with absolute thermal restraint.

Cold steep the remaining 15g of kombu in 1.5 liters of water for an hour, heat slowly to 140°F, and remove the kelp. Raise to 185°F, steep the remaining niboshi and shiitake mushrooms for 15 minutes, turn off the heat to add the rest of the katsuobushi for 5 minutes, and strain gently without pressing the solids to avoid clouding the broth.

2. Engineer the alkaline noodles.

Dissolve 1 teaspoon of salt and the baked baking soda completely into 190ml of water. Slowly drizzle this alkaline solution into the bread flour, mixing vigorously until crumbly, rest the dough for 30 minutes, and laminate it repeatedly through a pasta machine until flawlessly smooth before cutting into noodles.

3. Assemble the bowl with thermal urgency.

Preheat your serving bowls with boiling water, empty them, and pool 2.5 tablespoons of the aged tare and 1 tablespoon of aroma oil at the bottom. Blend the milky animal broth and clear seafood broth at a 60:40 ratio in a saucepan, bring to a simmer without salting it, and pour 350ml into the bowl just as you drop in the noodles after boiling them for exactly 90 seconds.

4. Crown the bowl with precise accoutrements.

Drape the cold-sliced chashu over the rim so the residual heat of the soup instantly melts its fat. Slice the marinated egg cleanly in half to reveal the gelatinous bullseye yolk, float it on the surface, garnish with scallions, and serve immediately.

CHEF'S NOTES

● **The golden rule of tare is absolute.**

You will be overwhelmingly tempted to salt the simmering bone broth after tending it all day. Do not do it. The broth is merely a textural and aromatic foundation; all salinity and seasoning must reside at the bottom of the bowl in the tare.

- **Never warm-slice the chashu.**

Attempting to slice freshly braised, warm pork belly will cause it to disintegrate into pulled pork. It must be chilled thoroughly overnight so the fat solidifies, allowing for structurally sound, paper-thin cuts.



The Bacon-Smoked Shoyu Tonkotsu

If you've ever stood freezing on a Little Tokyo sidewalk at eleven at night waiting for a bowl of ramen, this is for you. True tonkotsu is an obsession of increments, a feat of mechanical engineering that demands a violent, rolling boil to forcefully emulsify pork fat and water into a thick, milky-white broth. We're abandoning culinary shortcuts here: building a brutally concentrated bacon-smoked tare, cold-slicing the belly, and timing the egg to the second. It's a two-day project, but when you fold those alkaline noodles into the roaring hot soup, you'll know exactly why you did it.

INGREDIENTS

4 lb	pork split trotters	1 cup	mirin
4 lb	pork neck bones	3/4 cup	sake
2 lb	pork femurs <i>cracked or cut laterally</i>	1/2 cup	sugar
2 lb	skinless pork belly block <i>rolled tightly into a cylinder and tied with butcher's twine at 1-inch intervals</i>	1 tbsp	brown sugar
1 large	brown onion <i>unpeeled and halved</i>	8 med	scallions <i>half left whole, half thinly sliced</i>
1 large	garlic <i>whole head, sliced cleanly in half horizontally</i>	6 large	eggs <i>fridge cold</i>
2 med	ginger <i>knobs, roughly sliced</i>	1/4 cup	baking soda
1 lb	bacon <i>thick-cut applewood or hickory-smoked, chopped into lardons</i>	500 g	bread flour
1 med	kombu <i>3x5 inch piece</i>	190 g	water
2 1/2 cup	premium Japanese soy sauce	5 g	salt
		1/4 cup	wood-ear mushrooms <i>rehydrated and julienned</i>
		1 med	nori <i>roasted seaweed sheets, cut into rectangles</i>

PREPARATION

- **Soak the pork bones overnight to extract excess blood.**

Place all the pork bones in a massive stockpot, cover with cold water, and leave in the fridge overnight. This begins the critical process of leeching out impurities.

- **Bake the baking soda to create your alkaline kansui substitute.**

Spread a quarter cup of baking soda on a foil-lined sheet and bake at 350°F for exactly one hour. Use 5g of this powder with 500g bread flour, 190g water, and 5g salt to craft noodles with the proper bite and snap.

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Blanch and aggressively scrub the bones to purge all impurities.

Discard the overnight soaking water, cover the bones with fresh cold water by 2 inches, and boil aggressively for 20 minutes. Dump the terrifying amount of gray scum into the sink, then individually scrub every bone under cold running water to remove coagulated blood lines and black marrow.

2. Braise the rolled pork belly and chill it overnight before slicing.

Sear the tied pork belly until golden in a Dutch oven, then add 1 cup of soy sauce, 1 cup of water, 1/2 cup of mirin, 1/2 cup of sake, 1/2 cup of sugar, whole scallions, and a knob of ginger. Simmer covered on low for 3 hours, then cool completely and refrigerate in the liquid overnight; never slice it warm or it will shred.

3. Initiate a violent, rolling boil for the tonkotsu broth.

Return the meticulously scrubbed bones to a clean stockpot, cover with water by 3 inches, and add the halved onion, garlic, and remaining ginger. Bring to a violent, rolling boil on the highest possible heat.

4. Maintain the hellish agitation for twelve hours to emulsify the fat.

Do not drop the heat to a simmer; the water must crash and churn continuously to mechanically tear the fat from the bones and suspend it in the liquid. Top off with boiling water from a kettle every hour to keep the bones submerged, then strain the milky, opaque broth and refrigerate.

5. Boil the eggs for exactly six minutes and thirty seconds.

Pierce the wide ends of the cold eggs with a pin, boil them rapidly, and instantly plunge them into an ice water bath for 10 minutes. Peel and submerge them in one cup of the leftover cold chashu braising liquid for exactly 12 hours.

1. Render the bacon to extract the aroma oil and build the smoked tare.

Slowly render the bacon lardons until completely crisp, then strain and reserve the liquid bacon fat as your aroma oil. In the same skillet with the browned fond, steep the kombu in a cup of water for 10 minutes, remove it, then add 1 1/2 cups soy sauce, 1/2 cup mirin, 1/4 cup sake, and the brown sugar, simmering briefly into a concentrated syrup.

2. Construct the bowl with unseasoned broth, tare, and alkaline noodles.

Add 2 to 3 tablespoons of the tare and a tablespoon of smoky bacon oil to a warm bowl, then pour in 1 1/2 cups of screaming hot, unseasoned tonkotsu broth. Fold in the briefly boiled alkaline noodles, then drape with cold chashu slices, the halved bullseye egg, sliced scallions, wood-ear mushrooms, and nori.

CHEF'S NOTES

● **The broth remains entirely unseasoned.**

Resist the urge to salt the simmering cauldron. Authentic ramen grammar dictates that all salinity and umami live in the tare at the bottom of the bowl.

● **Clarity is a flaw.**

You are not making a delicate French consommé. The violent boiling action is necessary to shatter the pork fat into microscopic droplets, creating the signature opaque, lip-sticking emulsion.

● **Respect the temperature of the chashu.**

If you attempt to slice the braised pork belly while it is still warm, it will shred into unappealing chunks. Chill it overnight to solidify the fat, slice it cold, and let the ambient heat of the broth melt it in the bowl.



Plant-Based Seed Emulsion "Paitan"

プラントベース白湯

purantobēsu paitan

A vegan broth that actually respects the uncompromising grammar of a late-night ramen shop is a rare, beautiful thing. We aren't pouring a carton of soy milk into vegetable stock and calling it a weeknight hack. We are building a true paitan through violent agitation and heavy extraction. By roasting sunflower seeds and cashews, introducing them to a deeply savory kombu-shiitake dashi, and subjecting the whole pot to a punishing rolling boil and the mechanical shear of an immersion blender, we force the plant fats and starches into a permanent, lip-

coating emulsion. It takes hours, it demands patience, and the resulting milky-white elixir tastes exactly like a bowl you'd wait in line for in Little Tokyo.

INGREDIENTS

20 g	kombu	1 large	hand of fresh ginger <i>unpeeled and sliced thickly</i>
4 l	filtered water	1 med	Napa cabbage core
15 g	dried shiitake mushrooms	1 large	leek <i>green tops only</i>
2 cup	water <i>cold</i>	1 1/2 cup	raw sunflower seeds <i>shelled and unsalted</i>
2 large	yellow onions <i>unpeeled and cut in half</i>	1/2 cup	raw cashews
2 large	heads of garlic <i>halved horizontally</i>	2 tbsp	neutral oil
		3 tbsp	white miso

PREPARATION

- **Steep the botanical umami foundation overnight.**

Submerge the kombu in the 4 liters of filtered water in your large stock pot and let sit at room temperature for at least 10 hours. In a separate container, soak the dried shiitake mushrooms in the 2 cups of cold water overnight.

INSTRUCTIONS

- 1. Char the aromatics to build a roasted backbone.**

Heat a heavy cast-iron skillet until smoking, then place the onion halves, garlic halves, and ginger slices cut-side down until they are deeply blackened.

1. Roast the seeds and caramelize the miso.

Preheat an oven to 375°F, toss the sunflower seeds and cashews with the neutral oil, and roast on a baking sheet for 15 minutes. In the last 5 minutes, smear the white miso onto the pan and toss the seeds in it so the miso caramelizes and triggers the Maillard reaction.

2. Extract the dashi without boiling the kombu.

Place the stockpot with the cold-steeped kombu water over medium heat, and just before it reaches a simmer (around 140°F), remove the kombu and discard it to prevent extracting bitter mucilage.

3. Assemble the pot for the long extraction.

Add the soaked shiitake and their soaking liquid, the charred onions, garlic, ginger, Napa cabbage core, leek greens, and the roasted seeds with caramelized miso to the kombu water.

4. Subject the broth to a violent, rolling boil.

Bring the pot to a vigorous boil and maintain it for 4 to 6 hours, replenishing the water every hour with boiling water to keep the ingredients submerged. The aggressive churning physically batters the seeds and vegetables, breaking down cellular structures to release starches and oils.

5. Strain the murky, golden-brown liquid.

Strain the broth through a coarse sieve, pressing heavily on the solids with the back of a ladle to extract every drop of liquid and starch, then discard the spent solids and return the liquid to the pot.

6. Force the emulsion to achieve the true paitan.

Bring the strained broth back to a simmer and insert a high-powered immersion blender directly into the pot. Blend continuously for 5 to 10 minutes until the dark, oily liquid seizes and transforms into a brilliantly opaque, milky-white suspension.

CHEF'S NOTES

- **Under-salt the broth and rely on the tare.**

This is where seasoning lives. The broth's job is purely texture and baseline umami. If you taste the pot, it will feel flat. Do not panic and dump salt into the stockpot; instead, use approximately 2 tablespoons of tare per 300ml of broth directly in the serving bowl.

- **Bake your baking soda to recreate alkaline kansui.**

Ramen noodles demand a high alkaline pH for their characteristic snap. If you cannot source powdered kansui, spread baking soda on an aluminum foil-lined baking sheet and bake at 350°F for exactly 1 hour, then use 1 teaspoon dissolved in your hydration water per 100g of flour.

- **Respect the physical rules of ramen shop toppings.**

Always cold-slice your chashu—whether pork belly or braised portobello—so it doesn't disintegrate into chunks, letting it warm up gently only once draped over the hot broth. For the marinated egg, a 6-minute 30-second boil, an immediate ice bath, and a mandatory 12-hour marinade ensures the molten bullseye-yolk that defines a proper bowl.



Chapter 2 — The Noodles, Aroma Oil & Toppings: The Components

The specialized, precision-driven elements of American ramen, from alkaline noodles to caramelized oils and twelve-hour eggs.

Twelve hours in a soy-mirin bath. That is the minimum time required to cure the egg, setting the standard for grabbing a spool of butcher's twine, measuring alkaline kansui powder, or babysitting rolled pork belly until it yields. Execute the prep list to deliver the slick, alkaline chew of a from-scratch noodle, the dark,

brooding slick of charred black garlic mayu, and the jammy, soy-stained yolk of a twelve-hour egg, assembling the bowl so the heavy oil pools across the surface and the dense custard bleeds directly into the hot broth.





Momofuku Pork Belly Buns

Before Momofuku Noodle Bar, steamed pork buns belonged to Taiwanese street vendors and Japanese port cities. The American ramen shop bun is a different beast entirely. It demands a violent, high-heat roast to render the subcutaneous fat, a slow bake to tenderize the meat, and an uncompromising overnight chill. This is not a weeknight shortcut. It is a methodical study in culinary architecture that rewards patience with perfect, pillowy submission.

INGREDIENTS

3 lb	skinless fresh pork belly <i>left whole as a slab</i>	4 tsp	active dry yeast
1/4 cup	kosher salt	1 1/2 cup	water <i>at room temp</i>
1/4 cup	granulated white sugar	4 1/4 cup	bread flour

6 tbsp	granulated white sugar	2 med	Kirby cucumbers <i>sliced 1/8-inch thick</i>
3 tbsp	non-fat dry milk powder	1 tbsp	granulated white sugar
1 tbsp	kosher salt	1 tsp	kosher salt
1/2 tsp	baking powder	1/2 cup	hoisin sauce
1/2 tsp	baking soda	1 bunch	scallions <i>thinly sliced</i>
1/3 cup	rendered pork fat <i>softened to room temp</i>	2 tbsp	Sriracha sauce
2 tbsp	neutral oil		

PREPARATION

- **Cure the pork belly.**

In a bowl, mix the quarter-cups of salt and sugar, rub aggressively into all sides of the meat, and refrigerate tightly wrapped for 12 to 24 hours.

INSTRUCTIONS

- 1. Blast the cured belly at high heat to initiate the render.**

Preheat the oven to 450°F, wipe any drawn liquid from the meat, and roast fat-side up for exactly 1 hour, basting at the halfway mark.

- 2. Drop the temperature to gently braise the pork.**

Lower the oven to 250°F and continue roasting for another 60 to 75 minutes until the belly yields like a down pillow when prodded.

- 3. Chill the meat completely before slicing.**

Let the pork cool for 30 minutes, then wrap it tightly and refrigerate for at least 4 hours or overnight so the fat solidifies into pristine, sliceable slabs.

- 4. Mix the alkaline dough for the buns.**

Combine the yeast and room-temperature water in a mixer, then incorporate the bread flour, 6 tablespoons sugar, milk powder, 1 tablespoon salt, baking powder, baking soda, and reserved rendered pork fat.

1. Knead until tacky and proof until doubled.

Run the mixer on its lowest setting for 10 minutes until the dough gathers cleanly, then move to an oiled bowl, cover with a damp towel, and proof in a warm spot for 75 minutes.

2. Portion the dough and rest the gluten.

Punch the dough down, divide it into twenty-five 25-gram pieces, roll them into smooth spheres, and let them rest under plastic wrap for 30 minutes.

3. Shape the buns into their signature folded lips.

Roll each ball into a 4-inch oval, brush lightly with neutral oil, fold gently over an oiled chopstick, extract the wood, and proof the folded buns on parchment squares for 45 minutes.

4. Steam vigorously and rest to prevent shock.

Set a bamboo steamer over boiling water, steam the buns in uncrowded batches for exactly 10 minutes, then turn off the heat and wait 60 seconds before lifting the lid so they do not deflate.

5. Quick-pickle the cucumbers to cut the fat.

Toss the sliced cucumbers with 1 tablespoon sugar and 1 teaspoon salt, let the osmosis work for 10 minutes, and squeeze them completely dry in a clean kitchen towel.

6. Sear the cold pork slabs.

Slice the chilled belly half an inch thick and sear in a dry cast-iron skillet over medium-high heat until the edges caramelize and the fat jiggles.

7. Assemble the finished buns.

Pry open a warm bun, slather the inside with hoisin, lay down the pickled cucumbers and seared pork, and finish aggressively with scallions and Sriracha.

CHEF'S NOTES

- **Never slice warm pork belly.**

The temptation to cut into freshly roasted meat is immense, but doing so will destroy the structural integrity of the fat. Chilling overnight is mandatory for clean, ramen-shop-quality cuts.

- **Save the rendered fat.**

The violent high-heat roast will leave liquid gold in the bottom of your roasting pan. Reserve this pork fat to use as the shortening in your bun dough.

- **Respect the alkaline additions.**

The minimal baking soda in the bun dough slightly raises the pH to enhance Maillard browning, linking the bun philosophically to the alkaline noodles in your broth.



Toasted Rye Roasted Garlic Mazemen

焙煎ライ麦 マー油 まぜそば

baisen raimugi māyu mazesoba

This is not weeknight food; this is a weekend obsession. A proper bowl of mazemen trades a swimming pool of broth for a high-impact collision of intensely concentrated tare, pitch-black roasted garlic oil, and earthy, uncompromisingly chewy rye noodles. It demands patience for heavily agitated bone broths, reverence for alkaline dough, and a willingness to push garlic right to the edge of burnt carbon. When you finally fold this unapologetic bowl together, it shouldn't just taste good—it should taste exactly like a loud, crowded counter in Little Tokyo at midnight.

INGREDIENTS

3 lb	split pork trotters <i>rinsed</i>	15 g	niboshi <i>heads and guts removed</i>
2 lb	pork neck bones <i>rinsed</i>	10 g	katsuobushi
620 g	high-gluten bread flour	1 tbsp	brown sugar
300 g	cake flour	2 lb	skinless pork belly <i>rolled into a tight cylinder and tied</i>
75 g	dark rye flour	1 cup	water
430 ml	cool water	1 cup	soy sauce
13 g	kosher salt	1/2 cup	sake
10 g	baked baking soda	1/2 cup	mirin
150 g	pork lard	1/4 cup	sugar
100 g	toasted sesame oil	1 med	fresh ginger <i>thumb, smashed</i>
100 g	fresh garlic cloves <i>peeled and finely minced</i>	3 large	scallions
300 ml	Japanese soy sauce	8 large	large eggs <i>cold from the fridge</i>
50 ml	mirin	2 tbsp	white vinegar
20 ml	sake	8 large	scallions <i>finely chopped</i>
10 g	dried kombu	8 small	nori <i>sheets</i>

PREPARATION

- **Bake the baking soda.**

To create the essential alkaline kansui substitute, spread standard baking soda on an aluminum foil-lined baking sheet and bake at exactly 350°F for 1 hour. Weigh out exactly 10g for the noodles.

- **Blanch the bones.**

This initial blanch is an absolute, non-negotiable imperative. Bring the pork trotters and neck bones to a boil, discard the liquid, and scrub them aggressively under cold water to purge blood and impurities.

INSTRUCTIONS

1. **Agitate the bones into a milky-white broth.**

Boil the blanched pork bones at a violent rolling boil, replacing water as needed, for 8 to 18 hours. This mechanical violence is what emulsifies the fat and gelatin into the broth; clarity is your enemy here.

2. **Braise and cold-slice the chashu.**

Braise the rolled pork belly in soy, 1 cup water, sake, mirin, sugar, ginger, and 3 scallions for 3 to 4 hours. Let it cool completely in its liquid, refrigerate overnight, and cold-slice it into perfect discs—if you warm-slice it, the rendered fat collapses and the meat will shred into a pile.

3. **Execute the 6:30 egg.**

Lower cold eggs into boiling water with vinegar for exactly 6 minutes and 30 seconds, immediately shock in an ice bath, peel, and marinate for 12 hours. This rigid grammar is required to achieve that flawless, custardy bullseye yolk.

4. **Toast the rye flour.**

Dry-toast the dark rye flour in a skillet over medium-high heat for four minutes until it smells intensely nutty and wisps of smoke appear. Let it cool completely.

5. **Laminate the alkaline dough.**

Whisk the baked baking soda and kosher salt into the cool water, then mix into the flours until shaggy. Rest the dough for an hour, then sheet and fold it repeatedly through a pasta machine until leathery and smooth before cutting.

1. Isolate the seasoning in the tare.

Cold-steep the 300ml soy sauce, 50ml mirin, 20ml sake, kombu, and niboshi overnight. Bring to a simmer, remove the kombu, stir in the brown sugar and katsuobushi, steep for 10 minutes, and strain. Remember: the broth itself remains unseasoned; this intensely salty reduction is the locus of flavor.

2. Fry the garlic through three stages.

Melt the lard and sesame oil, and add the minced garlic. Fry to a pale blonde and remove one-third. Continue to a deep mahogany brown and remove another third. Let the final third go unapologetically pitch-black and slightly acrid—this is the intended grammar of proper mayu.

3. Blend the roasted garlic oil.

Carefully pour the hot oil and pitch-black carbonized garlic into a blender with the first two stages, blending on high until it forms a gritty, opaque, black liquid.

4. Assemble with urgency.

Warm a bowl, add 2 tablespoons each of tare and tonkotsu broth, and 1.5 tablespoons of warmed mayu. Boil the noodles for exactly 60 to 90 seconds, drain vigorously, and fold them aggressively into the liquid emulsion. Top with the torched chashu, the halved egg, scallions, and nori. Serve immediately.



Akamaru "Umami Dama" & Mayu Tonkotsu

赤丸豚骨

akamaru tonkotsu

A proper bowl of tonkotsu ramen is an act of violent devotion, a multi-day collision of heavy pork bones and fierce rolling boils that yields a sticky, milky-white emulsion. This is the modern, aggressive red bowl, where the pure foundation of Hakata-style broth is hijacked by a charred black garlic oil and a spicy fermented miso bomb. It demands a weekend of your life, but when the sharp chew of alkaline noodles meets that rich, fat-laced soup, you will wipe your brow and know exactly what Little Tokyo tastes like at midnight.

INGREDIENTS

2 lb	pork femurs <i>cracked or cut to expose marrow</i>	1 tbsp	toban djan
2 lb	pork neck bones	1 tbsp	sesame oil
2 lb	pig trotters <i>split lengthwise</i>	1 tsp	sugar
1 cup	baking soda	52 large cloves	fresh garlic <i>50 cloves thinly sliced, 2 cloves finely minced</i>
500 g	high-protein bread flour	1/2 cup	lard
160 ml	water	1/2 cup	neutral oil
2 tbsp	sea salt	1 lb	braised pork belly <i>chilled overnight</i>
1/2 cup	Japanese soy sauce	4 large	eggs <i>cold from the fridge</i>
1/4 cup	mirin	1/4 cup	dried wood ear mushrooms <i>rehydrated</i>
50 ml	chicken stock	1 bunch	scallions <i>sliced paper-thin</i>
3 tbsp	red miso		

PREPARATION

- **Transform the baking soda into an alkaline salt.**

Spread one cup of baking soda on a foil-lined baking sheet and bake at 350°F for exactly one hour to create sodium carbonate, storing the highly alkaline powder in an airtight jar.

- **Soak the pork bones to purge the blood.**

Submerge the cracked femurs, neck bones, and split trotters in cold water for at least one hour before cooking.

- **Construct the marinated soft-boiled eggs.**

Lower cold eggs into rapidly boiling water for exactly 6 minutes and 30 seconds, immediately shock in an ice bath, peel, and submerge in a chilled marinade of equal parts water, soy sauce, and mirin for twelve hours.

- **Thoroughly chill the braised pork belly.**

If you are making chashu, braise the pork belly ahead of time and chill it completely in the refrigerator overnight so the lipid structures solidify.

INSTRUCTIONS

- 1. Blanch and aggressively scrub the bones.**

Cover the soaked bones with cold water and boil violently for 15 minutes to coagulate impurities, then discard the murky liquid and scrub every crevice of the bones under cold running water.

- 2. Execute a twelve-to-fourteen-hour rolling boil to emulsify the broth.**

Return the cleaned bones to a fresh pot of water and maintain a violent, rolling boil—not a simmer—replenishing with boiling water hourly to force the fat and gelatin into a sticky, milky-white suspension.

- 3. Create the five-stage black garlic oil.**

Slowly fry fifty sliced garlic cloves in a blend of lard and neutral oil, pulling a fifth of the garlic out at blond, brown, dark brown, and black stages, leaving the final fifth to fully carbonize before blending it all back into the hot oil to form a pitch-black paste.

- 4. Mix the spicy umami dama paste.**

Fry the minced garlic in a splash of oil until golden, then fold it off the heat into the red miso, toban djan, sugar, and sesame oil, rolling the dense mixture into small mounds.

- 5. Hydrate and sheet the alkaline noodles.**

Dissolve one teaspoon of your baked baking soda and a pinch of salt into 160ml of water, vigorously mix it into the bread flour until it resembles wet sand, then rest, sheet, and cut the dough into ultra-thin, straight noodles.

1. Assemble the bowls with absolute precision.

Add two tablespoons of the soy and mirin tare to a hot, dry bowl, ladle in the furiously boiling, unseasoned tonkotsu broth, fold in the freshly boiled noodles, and crown with cold chashu, scallions, wood ear mushrooms, a drizzle of mayu, and the umami dama.

CHEF'S NOTES

● **Seasoning belongs strictly in the tare.**

The broth provides mouthfeel, fat, and aroma, while the tare provides salinity and umami, so resist the urge to salt your 14-hour pork stock directly.

● **Never slice your chashu warm.**

Slicing warm pork belly results in shredded, collapsed meat; it must be sliced ice-cold, allowing the scalding broth to melt the fat right as it hits the bowl.

● **Clarity expectations for this broth are explicitly zero.**

If your stock is clear, you are doing it wrong; the intense kinetic energy of the boil is necessary to shear the fat into microscopic droplets for that signature sticky, opaque texture.



The Shop-Worker's Chashu Donburi with Negiyu

チャーシュー丼

chāshū donburi

Long after the line out the door has dissipated and the "Sold Out" sign hangs in the window, the cooks need to eat. This makanai—staff meal—is a masterclass in culinary economy, built from the irregular, deeply seasoned end cuts of a perfect chashu roll and a splash of master tare. Seared in a screaming hot pan and dumped over short-grain rice with a hit of aromatic, lard-based negiyu, it's fast, aggressively savory, and tastes exactly like the sweaty, triumphant end of a Friday night shift in Little Tokyo.

INGREDIENTS

1 cup	pork lard <i>rendered backfat or leaf lard</i>	1 cup	chashu end cuts <i>thoroughly chilled and diced into 1/2-inch cubes</i>
2 large	Tokyo negi <i>dark green tops only, roughly chopped into 2-inch pieces</i>	2 tbsp	master chashu tare
4 med	garlic cloves <i>peeled and smashed whole</i>	2 cup	freshly steamed Japanese short-grain white rice <i>kept steaming hot</i>
1 med	ginger <i>skins peeled from a 2-inch knob, flesh reserved for another use</i>	2 tbsp	scallions <i>finely sliced, white and light green parts only</i>
		1 tsp	toasted white sesame seeds

PREPARATION

- **Prepare your master chashu and tare.**

This staff meal utilizes the byproducts of your main ramen components. Ensure your rolled pork belly is braised, completely chilled, and your master tare is strained and reserved before firing this bowl.

INSTRUCTIONS

- 1. Extract the green onion aroma oil from a cold start.**

Place the cold lard, chopped negi tops, smashed garlic, and ginger skins in an unheated, heavy-bottomed saucepan. Turn the heat to medium-low and maintain a gentle, steady bubbling for 20 to 25 minutes as the water is slowly driven out of the vegetables.

- 2. Strain the negiyu the moment the aromatics turn golden brown.**

When the green onions shrivel and take on a deep, fox-brown color, immediately kill the heat to prevent scorching. Pour the hot oil through a fine-mesh strainer into a heat-proof glass jar and discard the spent solids.

1. Sear the cold, diced chashu in a dry, hot skillet.

Heat a carbon steel skillet or wok over medium-high heat. Toss in the chilled chashu cubes and leave them completely undisturbed for 45 seconds to develop a serious crust, then toss until the fat renders and the meat crisps.

2. Deglaze the pan with the master chashu tare.

Pour the tare directly into the hot pan. Toss the pork continuously for about 15 seconds until the liquid reduces into a dark, sticky syrup that heavily coats every piece of meat, then immediately remove from the heat.

3. Build the bowls and serve immediately.

Divide the caramelized chashu evenly over two steaming bowls of short-grain rice, scraping any remaining sticky tare over the top. Scatter with the fresh scallion slices, drizzle a tablespoon of your freshly made negiyu over each bowl, and finish with a sprinkle of sesame seeds.

CHEF'S NOTES

● **Respect the grammar of the bowl.**

The tare used here is not a separate recipe—it must be the exact braising liquid reserved from your master chashu. This cyclical use of ingredients is the absolute backbone of ramen shop flavor building.

● **Never warm-slice your chashu.**

Attempting to slice a warm chashu roll will cause the un-set gelatin and liquid fat to shred into an unpresentable mess. Chill it fully in the fridge overnight before slicing the center cuts for ramen and taking the uneven ends for this donburi.



Plant-Based "Umami Dama" Eggplant Mazemen

旨味玉茄子まぜそば

umami-dama nasu mazesoba

Plant-based cooking in the West is too often conflated with quick, light weeknight compromises. A proper bowl of ramen rejects that paradigm entirely. Stripped of a heavy eighteen-hour broth, this mazemen relies on the violent, aggressive emulsification of a dark tare, aromatic oil, and the sharp snap of from-scratch alkaline noodles. We construct a fatty mouthfeel by heavily salting and flash-frying Japanese eggplant until it mimics the rendered custard of a pork belly chashu, anchoring

the whole thing with a fiercely pungent umami dama. This is a multi-day project for the uncompromising cook who understands that a perfect bowl is an assembly of meticulously engineered components.

INGREDIENTS

400 g	bread flour	2 med	garlic cloves <i>microplaned</i>
4 g	salt	1 tsp	fresh ginger <i>microplaned</i>
4 g	baked baking soda	1 tsp	toasted sesame oil
160 ml	warm water	1/2 tsp	sugar
2 tbsp	cornstarch	3 med	Japanese eggplants <i>stems removed, cut into 1-inch thick slabs and scored crosshatch</i>
200 ml	premium soy sauce	1/2 cup	TVP <i>soaked in hot water for 10 minutes and squeezed completely dry</i>
50 ml	mirin	1/4 cup	neutral oil
1 med	kombu <i>cut into a 3x3 inch square</i>	1 tbsp	tianmianjiang
2 large	dried shiitake mushrooms	1 tbsp	soy sauce
1 tbsp	brown sugar	1 tbsp	Shaoxing wine
150 ml	neutral oil	1/4 cup	garlic chives <i>finely chopped</i>
1 bunch	scallions <i>roughly chopped green parts only</i>	1/4 cup	scallions <i>finely chopped</i>
4 med	garlic cloves <i>smashed</i>	1 pinch	kizami nori
1 tsp	whole Sichuan peppercorns	4 large	ajitama <i>cold-sliced in half</i>
3 tbsp	red miso		
1 tbsp	doubanjiang		

PREPARATION

- **Bake the baking soda to convert it to a caustic kansui substitute.**

Spread standard baking soda in a thin layer on a foil-lined baking sheet and bake at 350°F for exactly 1 hour, converting the weak sodium bicarbonate into high-pH sodium carbonate, then store in an airtight container.

- **Purge the eggplant of its bitter compounds and air pockets.**

Submerge the scored eggplant slabs in heavily salted water for 15 minutes to collapse the spongy cellular structure, then pat completely dry to ensure it fries rather than steams.

- **Cold steep the glutamic foundation.**

Combine the premium soy sauce, mirin, kombu, dried shiitake, and brown sugar in a saucepan and let sit at room temperature for at least 4 hours before applying any heat.

INSTRUCTIONS

1. **Hydrate and sheet the alkaline noodle dough.**

Dissolve the salt and baked baking soda into the warm water, drizzle it into the bread flour while mixing on low to form shaggy crumbs, wrap tightly to rest for 1 hour, then run through a pasta machine until velvety before cutting to a 2mm thickness.

2. **Cure the noodles overnight.**

Dust the cut strands generously with cornstarch and store them in a sealed container in the refrigerator to firm the snap.

3. **Render the scallion-garlic aroma oil.**

Fry the neutral oil, chopped scallions, smashed garlic, and peppercorns in a saucepan over medium-low heat until the garlic is deep golden brown, then strain and reserve.

1. Simmer and reduce the tare.

Bring the cold-steeped tare to a bare simmer, immediately discard the kombu to avoid bitter slime, and simmer gently for 10 minutes to evaporate the alcohol and concentrate the flavors before straining.

2. Formulate the umami dama.

Vigorously mix the red miso, doubanjiang, microplaned garlic, ginger, sesame oil, and sugar into a sticky paste, then roll into four equal spheres.

3. Flash-fry the eggplant chashu.

Heat neutral oil in a wide skillet over medium-high heat and fry the purged, completely dry eggplant slabs skin-side down until blistered, flipping once until the interior yields to tongs like a custard.

4. Braise the TVP mince and eggplant.

Drain excess oil from the skillet, fry the rehydrated TVP for two minutes, stir in the tianmianjiang, soy sauce, and Shaoxing wine, then nestle the eggplant back into the pan with two tablespoons of water to steam covered for exactly two minutes.

5. Assemble the bowl with absolute precision.

Warm your bowls with boiling water and wipe dry, add two tablespoons of tare and one and a half tablespoons of aroma oil, then drop in the boiled, well-drained noodles without mixing.

6. Arrange the toppings and serve immediately.

Place the raw alliums, nori, and eggplant geometrically around the perimeter, drop the mince in the dead center crowned with the ajitama, and rest the umami dama on the edge to be dissolved as the diner aggressively mixes the bowl into a thick emulsion.

CHEF'S NOTES

- **The tare dictates the seasoning, not the components.**

The home cook is frequently tempted to over-salt bases and broths, but the eggplant and TVP are under-salted by design; the true sodium payload lives entirely in the emulsified tare.

- **Never warm-slice your chashu.**

Whether working with pork belly or this highly-engineered eggplant equivalent, if you attempt to slice or deeply handle it while warm, it will disintegrate. It must be prepared and rested properly.

- **The bullseye-yolk is non-negotiable.**

For the perfect ajitama, boil your eggs for exactly 6 minutes and 30 seconds, plunge them into an ice bath, and marinate in equal parts soy, mirin, and water for a full 12 hours. Strict vegans may substitute a spoonful of grated nagaimo seasoned with kala namak.



Chapter 3 — The Bowls: Composed Assembly

The fast-paced, architectural assembly of the perfect bowl, bringing broth, tare, noodles, and toppings into singular focus.

A line cook snaps the alkaline strands over the sink, grabbing the bamboo chili paddle before the pork fat sets. All the grueling hours spent nursing pork bones into milky oblivion or coaxing the deep funk out of dried sardines

culminate in forty-five seconds of kitchen logistics. A flick of the noodle basket, a measured splash of tare, the two-ounce ladle of blistering broth, and the precise arrangement of fat-ringed chashu.

From the heavy-metal richness of a Hakata tonkotsu to the nuanced clarity of a Tokyo shoyu, these bowls demand exact execution. They are built not for lingering, but for the primal satisfaction of a furious slurp. Here are the blueprints for the final rush.





The Wok-Fired Sapporo Miso Assembly

札幌味噌ラーメン

sapporo miso ramen

It's freezing in Hokkaido, and you need a bowl that fights back. True Sapporo miso ramen is an exercise in culinary violence and precise thermal control. You don't gently simmer this; you blast aromatics in smoking lard, sear the miso paste to strip its raw edge, and force an emulsion in the wok with roaring pork broth. The thick layer of rendered fat floating on top isn't a garnish—it's structural insulation designed to trap the heat. This is the methodical assembly that makes your eighteen-hour weekend project of boiling bones and baking baking soda worth every goddamn second.

INGREDIENTS

100 g	shiro miso (white miso)	1 tsp	fresh ginger <i>finely grated</i>
100 g	aka miso (red miso)	1/4 med	yellow onion <i>thinly sliced</i>
2 tbsp	sesame oil	2 oz	mung bean sprouts
2 tbsp	soy sauce	14 oz	milky-white tonkotsu broth <i>kept at a rolling boil</i>
1 tbsp	mirin	1 portion	raw alkaline noodles <i>freshly sheeted and cut</i>
1 tbsp	sake	2 slice	chashu pork belly <i>cold-cut</i>
1 tsp	ichimi togarashi	1 large	ajitsuke tamago <i>sliced in half</i>
1/2 tsp	ground sansho pepper	2 tbsp	sweet corn kernels
2 tbsp	pure rendered pork lard	10 g	unsalted butter
2 oz	fatty ground pork	1 med	scallion <i>finely chopped (green parts only)</i>
1 tsp	fresh garlic <i>finely grated</i>		

PREPARATION

- **Whisk together the Master Miso Tare.**

In a mixing bowl, combine the shiro miso, aka miso, sesame oil, soy sauce, mirin, sake, ichimi togarashi, and ground sansho pepper. Whisk until perfectly smooth. Store this in an airtight container in the refrigerator overnight to allow the complex flavors to meld. This yields enough tare for 6 to 8 bowls of ramen.

INSTRUCTIONS

- 1. Warm your bowl and establish temperature control.**

Ramen is a game of seconds. Fill your ceramic ramen bowl with boiling water for 5 minutes, then dump it and wipe the bowl completely dry. Keep your tonkotsu broth at a bare simmer on a back burner, and bring a large pasta pot of unsalted water to a rapid, violent boil for the noodles.

1. Heat the lard until it smokes.

Place a heavy carbon steel wok or enameled cast-iron Dutch oven over the highest heat your stove can produce. Add the pork lard and let it melt until it is shimmering and just barely beginning to smoke. Do not substitute cooking oil; the rendered pork fat is a structural necessity.

2. Sear the pork and blast the aromatics.

Throw the ground pork into the smoking lard and let it sear to develop a crust before stirring. Add the grated garlic and ginger to let the aromas bloom violently, then toss in the sliced onions and bean sprouts. Toss rapidly to coat the vegetables in the fat, charring the edges while keeping the centers crisp.

3. Bake the miso paste in the smoking fat.

Push the meat and vegetables up the sides of the wok to expose the center. Drop 3 to 4 tablespoons of your pre-made Master Miso Tare directly into the hot lard. Allow the paste to fry and sear until the sound changes from a high-pitched crackle to a low, heavy sizzle, roasting away the raw fermented edge.

4. Force the emulsification with boiling broth.

Ladle 14 ounces of the boiling tonkotsu broth directly into the wok, where it will spit and roar. Stir aggressively with a ladle; the vigorous boiling action forces the lard, the heavy pork stock, and the roasted miso to physically emulsify into a creamy, opaque soup. Turn off the heat immediately.

5. Boil the alkaline noodles for exactly ninety seconds.

Drop your alkaline noodles into the rapidly boiling unsalted water. Because of the high pH, they cook fast and need to retain a distinct snap to stand up to the heavy soup. Drain them aggressively in a basket strainer, shaking out every single drop of water so it does not dilute the broth.

1. **Construct the architecture of the bowl.**

Pour the boiling, emulsified soup and all the wok-fired vegetables into the pre-warmed ceramic bowl. You should see a distinct layer of golden lard floating on top. Neatly fold the drained noodles into the soup. Arrange the cold-sliced chashu, lean the two halves of the egg against the pork, mound the sweet corn on the side, and place the butter directly over the corn. Finish with scallions and serve immediately. The first sip should induce a sweat, coat your lips in collagen, and elicit one thought: YES, THIS IS EXACTLY WHAT LITTLE TOKYO TASTES LIKE.

CHEF'S NOTES

- **Master the violent rolling boil of the tonkotsu broth.**

This is a multi-hour weekend project. Bone selection (split trotters and neck bones) and the initial 15-minute blanch are essential to discard blood and oxidized impurities. The violent agitation of a rolling boil is what mechanically whisks the melting fat into the water—do not simmer. Maintain the water line with boiling water to keep the temperature up. The result should be a milky-white, opaque liquid; it should absolutely not be clear.

- **Rely on the tare for all of your seasoning.**

The home cook is always tempted to over-season the broth pot. Redirect that instinct. The tonkotsu broth must remain fundamentally under-salted, serving only as a vessel for texture and fat. The actual salinity and complex regional flavor live entirely in the layered miso tare.

- **Bake your baking soda for authentic alkaline noodles.**

Alkaline pH is the secret to a noodle with proper snap that won't turn to mush in boiling soup. If you cannot source liquid kansui, spread standard baking soda on a foil-lined baking sheet and bake at 350°F for exactly 1 hour. This thermal decomposition converts it into the sodium carbonate you need.

- **Always cold-slice your chashu pork belly.**

After braising low and slow, the pork belly must be chilled overnight in the refrigerator. Warm pork belly will shred and fall apart under a knife. Cold slicing yields the perfectly uniform, thin rounds seen at Daikokuya, which melt instantly upon hitting the hot soup.

- **Chase the bullseye yolk for the marinated egg.**

The bullseye yolk is the entire point. Execute a strict 6-minute and 30-second boil, immediately plunge the egg into an ice bath to arrest cooking, peel, and submerge in your umami marinade for a minimum of 12 hours.



The Jiro-Style 'Blunt-Force' Tonkotsu

家二郎

ie-jirō

There is a specific kind of beautiful madness in dedicating three days to a single bowl of soup. This is not the delicate, translucent broth of a refined Tokyo shio; this is a blunt-force instrument of pork fat, alkaline chew, and raw garlic meant to unapologetically punch you in the mouth. It demands a violent, rolling boil to shatter and emulsify trotters and back fat into a milky-white suspension, a deeply fermented soy tare where all the seasoning actually lives, and low-hydration

noodles engineered with alkaline salts just to survive the bath. For the cook willing to submit to the long, exacting rhythm of the ramen shop, this is exactly what 11 p.m. in Little Tokyo tastes like.

INGREDIENTS

1/2 cup	baking soda	1 med	garlic
2 cup	koikuchi soy sauce	head	<i>halved</i>
1/2 cup	mirin	1 med	onion
1/4 cup	water		<i>halved</i>
2 tbsp	brown sugar	2 oz	ginger
2 tbsp	MSG		<i>sliced</i>
4 large	eggs	500 g	bread flour
	<i>cold from the fridge</i>	5 g	salt
2 lb	pork trotters	175 g	water
	<i>split lengthwise by the butcher</i>		<i>warm</i>
3 lb	pork neck bones	1 med	cabbage
1 lb	pork back fat	head	<i>roughly chopped</i>
2 lb	pork belly block	1 lb	bean sprouts
	<i>skinless</i>		
		16 med	garlic
		clove	<i>minced</i>
		1/4 cup	cornstarch
			<i>for dusting</i>

PREPARATION

- **Bake the baking soda for exactly one hour at 350°F on a foil-lined tray.**

This thermal reaction drives off water and carbon dioxide, converting mild sodium bicarbonate into highly caustic, alkaline sodium carbonate, which gives ramen noodles their essential snap.

- **Simmer the soy sauce, mirin, water, brown sugar, and MSG until completely dissolved, then cool.**

In ramen-shop grammar, the broth is an unseasoned canvas of texture; the intense salinity and umami live entirely here in this concentrated tare.

- **Boil the cold eggs for exactly 6 minutes and 30 seconds, plunge into an ice bath, peel, and submerge in diluted tare.**

Dilute a half-cup of your prepared tare with a half-cup of water. The eggs require a strict 12-hour soak in the refrigerator to achieve the perfect gelled bullseye-yolk.

INSTRUCTIONS

1. **Cover the trotters and neck bones with cold water, bring to a rapid boil for 15 minutes, then drain and vigorously scrub every bone under cold running water.**

This initial blanch is non-negotiable. Skipping it traps coagulated blood and marrow impurities that will sour and ruin the final broth; the bones must be pristine.

2. **Return the clean bones to the pot with the back fat, pork belly, and five liters of water, and maintain a violent, rolling boil.**

Do not simmer. The violent kinetic agitation is what shatters the rendering fat, allowing the gelatin from the trotters to permanently suspend it into an opaque, milky-white emulsion.

3. **Remove the tender pork belly after two hours of boiling and submerge it directly into the undiluted cold tare to marinate.**

The pork bleeds its meaty juices into the tare while absorbing the dark soy profile. Chill the meat completely overnight; attempting to warm-slice the chashu will cause it to shred into an unpresentable mess.

4. **Boil the remaining bones and fat for another 6 to 8 hours, topping off with boiling water hourly, and add the halved garlic head, onion, and ginger in the final hour.**

Scoop out the rendered blocks of back fat, chop them finely, mix with three tablespoons of tare, and reserve for topping. Strain the finished milky-white broth and discard the spent bones.

- 1. Dissolve five grams of the baked baking soda and the salt in the warm water, mix into the bread flour until shaggy, then aggressively knead and pass through a pasta machine.**

The 35 percent hydration dough will look like dry pebbles initially. Only through repeated sheeting and laminating will the stiff gluten network align into smooth, dense noodles, which you will cut into thick strands and dust with cornstarch.

- 2. Blanch the roughly chopped cabbage in boiling water for 90 seconds, adding the bean sprouts for the last 30 seconds, then drain.**

The vegetable mountain must remain crisp to provide vital structural and textual contrast against the aggressive fat of the tonkotsu.

- 3. Pour a ladle of boiling unseasoned broth over three tablespoons of tare in a warmed bowl, fold in the boiled noodles, fanned cold-sliced chashu, and halved egg.**

Crown the center with a massive pile of the warm blanched vegetables, spoon the hot, seasoned back fat directly over the peak, and finish with a large spoonful of raw minced garlic at the base. Serve immediately.

CHEF'S NOTES

- **Handle the baked baking soda with extreme care.**

Once baked, sodium bicarbonate becomes caustic sodium carbonate. Avoid touching it with wet bare hands or inhaling the fine dust.

- **Pair with a crisp, cold Japanese lager.**

The intense, emulsified volume of a Jiro bowl demands an ice-cold beer to repeatedly cut the fat and reset the palate.



Texas Smoked Brisket Tsukemen

つけ麺

tsu-ke-men

This is not a Tuesday night dinner. It is a profound homage to the cooks manning heavy steel stockpots in the back alleys of Tokyo and the smokehouses of Lockhart. True flavor is built through deliberate extraction and an unapologetic respect for the rules. We're taking the heavy, peppery bark of Central Texas smoked brisket and forcing it to play by the strict, uncompromising grammar of an eighteen-hour Japanese ramen shop. It is an obsessive weekend project of violent

emulsions, alkaline chemistry, and layered tare. And when you finally drag a cold, snappy noodle through that smoky, milky-white broth, you'll know exactly why you surrendered your weekend.

INGREDIENTS

3 lb	pork trotters <i>split lengthwise by the butcher</i>	475 g	bread flour
3 lb	pork neck bones	25 g	tapioca starch
2 lb	beef marrow bones <i>cut into 2-inch pieces</i>	200 g	warm water
1 large	onion <i>unpeeled and halved</i>	7 1/2 g	baked baking soda
2 large	heads garlic <i>halved crosswise</i>	7 1/2 g	sea salt
1 large	knob ginger <i>sliced</i>	4 large	eggs <i>cold</i>
1 cup	Japanese soy sauce	1/2 cup	water
1/4 cup	mirin	1/2 cup	soy sauce
1 piece	kombu <i>4x4 inches</i>	1/4 cup	mirin
1/2 cup	niboshi <i>heads and dark guts removed</i>	1 splash	white vinegar
2 tbsp	brown sugar	1 lb	Texas smoked brisket <i>completely chilled</i>
1/2 cup	baking soda	1 med	lime <i>cut into wedges</i>
		2 tbsp	chili crisp

PREPARATION

- **Bake the baking soda to convert it to an alkaline salt.**

Spread 1/2 cup standard baking soda evenly on a foil-lined baking sheet and bake at 350°F for exactly 1 hour. It converts to caustic sodium carbonate. Let cool and store in an airtight jar.

- **Steep the tare ingredients overnight.**

Combine 1 cup Japanese soy sauce, 1/4 cup mirin, the kombu piece, and the cleaned niboshi in a jar. Let steep in the fridge for 24 hours prior to simmering.

- **Chill the brisket completely.**

The smoked brisket must be completely chilled in the refrigerator overnight. Never slice warm brisket for this bowl, or it will disintegrate into pulled beef.

INSTRUCTIONS

- 1. Execute the essential blanch on the bones.**

Place the pork trotters, neck bones, and beef marrow bones in a massive stockpot and cover with cold water. Bring to a rapid boil and let it boil violently for 10 minutes to expel coagulated blood and impurities, then dump the entire contents of the pot into a clean sink.

- 2. Scrub every single bone clean.**

Under cold running water, scrub away the black marrow lines from the spines and any remaining blood. This obsessive cleaning is the difference between a foul, muddy soup and a profound ramen shop broth.

- 3. Shatter the fat into a violent emulsion.**

Return the pristine bones to a clean stockpot with exactly 6 qt of fresh water. Bring to a rolling boil and maintain this violent agitation—do not reduce to a simmer—for 18 hours. This mechanical blending suspends the fat into the collagen. Replenish with boiling water every hour to keep bones submerged, dropping in the onion, garlic, and ginger at hour 12.

- 4. Strain the milky-white tonkotsu.**

At hour 18, the broth should be thick, opaque, and milky-white. Strain through a fine-mesh chinois, pressing the remaining matter with a ladle. Store in the fridge overnight until it sets into a dense rubber-like gelatin.

1. Concentrate the seasoning vector.

Pour the steeped tare liquid into a saucepan and bring to a very gentle simmer. Hold at 176°F for 10 minutes—do not let it boil, or the kombu turns bitter. Strain out the solids and whisk in the brown sugar until dissolved.

2. Hydrate the alkaline noodle dough.

Dissolve 7 1/2 g of your baked baking soda and the sea salt into 200 g of warm water. With a stand mixer running on low, slowly drizzle the alkaline water into the bread flour and tapioca starch until it resembles coarse, dry sand. Form into a tight ball and rest for 1 hour.

3. Laminate and cut the noodles.

Pass the dough through a pasta sheeter on the widest setting. Fold it in half and pass it through again, repeating this lamination 5 times until incredibly smooth. Roll to a thick setting and cut into extra-thick Gokubuto strands, dusting heavily with cornstarch before refrigerating.

4. Chase the bullseye yolk.

Plunge 4 cold eggs directly into boiling water with a splash of vinegar for exactly 6 minutes and 30 seconds. Immediately transfer to an ice bath to shock. Peel and submerge in the marinade of water, soy sauce, and mirin for exactly 12 hours.

5. Cold-slice the brisket.

Using a sharp carving knife, cut the fully chilled smoked brisket into perfect, 1/4-inch thick rectangular slabs.

6. Boil and wash the noodles.

Drop the fresh noodles into a massive pot of unsalted boiling water for 5 to 6 minutes. Drain and immediately rinse them vigorously under cold running water to stop the cooking and lock in the dense, snappy alkaline texture.

7. Compose the dipping broth.

Heat 3 cups of the solidified tonkotsu-gyukotsu gelatin in a saucepan until it returns to a rolling boil. In a heated serving bowl, pour 3 tablespoons of the tare and ladle in 1 1/2 cups of the boiling broth. Drop in a few small cubes of cold brisket to warm through.

1. **Build the final plate.**

Fold the cold, washed noodles elegantly on a separate plate. Fan the cold-sliced Texas brisket against the noodles and place a cleanly halved marinated egg alongside. Serve with a lime wedge and chili crisp.

CHEF'S NOTES

- **Do not salt the broth pot.**

The home cook will be tempted to season the simmering liquid. Seasoning lives in the tare, not the broth. The broth exists purely for texture and unseasoned meat essence. Salt the tare heavily; leave the broth alone.

- **Clarity is the enemy.**

This is a paitan broth. If you simmer gently for clarity, you have failed. The rolling boil must be violent enough to mechanically emulsify the fat and marrow into a milky-white suspension.

- **Handle baked baking soda with care.**

Thermal degradation creates sodium carbonate, which is a caustic skin irritant. Do not handle it with wet hands.



The Oxtail & Marrow 'Deli' Ramen

This isn't a weeknight shortcut; it's a brutal, uncompromising commitment. We're taking the milky, marrow-heavy extraction of a Korean gomtang, the precise grammar of a Japanese ramen shop, and colliding it with the acidic, fatty hallmarks of a New York Jewish deli. You will purge bones, you will sustain a violent 18-hour boil to force an emulsion, and you will wait out the clock on alkaline noodles and marinated eggs. The reward is a bowl that hits exactly like a midnight counter seat at Daikokuya—excessive, brilliant, and deeply earned.

INGREDIENTS

3 lb oxtail

3 lb split beef marrow bones

2 large	yellow onions <i>halved and charred</i>	110 g	water
1 head	garlic <i>halved crosswise</i>	3 g	baked baking soda
1 med knob	fresh ginger <i>roughly chopped</i>	3 g	sea salt
1 cup	Japanese soy sauce	1/2 lb	cooked beef brisket <i>chilled completely and sliced 1/4-inch thick</i>
1/4 cup	mirin	4 large	large eggs <i>cold from the fridge</i>
1/4 cup	sake	1 tbsp	white vinegar
1 med piece	kombu	2 med	half-sour deli pickles <i>cut into thin spears</i>
1/4 cup	dried shiitake mushrooms	1 cup	green cabbage <i>finely shredded</i>
1 tbsp	Worcestershire sauce	1/2 cup	scallions <i>thinly sliced</i>
300 g	bread flour	1/4 cup	menma

PREPARATION

- **Purge the heavy bones of blood and impurities.**

Submerge the oxtails and marrow bones entirely in a large pot of cold water and let them soak for 3 to 6 hours in the refrigerator, changing the water every hour or two as it turns pink.

- **Make the baked baking soda substitute for kansui.**

Preheat your oven to 350°F. Spread 1/2 cup of regular baking soda evenly across an aluminum foil-lined baking sheet and bake for exactly 1 hour. Let it cool and store it in an airtight jar. Do not touch it with wet hands.

INSTRUCTIONS

- 1. Blanch and meticulously scrub the purged bones to remove foul-tasting scum.**

Cover the soaked bones with fresh cold water in your stockpot and bring to a rapid boil for 20 minutes. Dump the entire apocalyptic mess into a clean sink, discard the foul liquid, and scrub every solitary bone under cold running water to remove dark blood clots before washing your stockpot.
- 2. Maintain a violent, rolling boil for 12 to 18 hours to emulsify the marrow fat.**

Return the pristine bones to the clean pot, cover with water by at least two inches, add the charred onions, garlic, and ginger, and crank the heat to high. Do not simmer this gently; the violent mechanical agitation is biochemically mandatory to smash the melted marrow fat into microscopic droplets, creating a milky-white, opaque paitan broth. Replenish the evaporating liquid every hour exclusively with boiling water to keep the emulsion from breaking, then strain and discard the solids.
- 3. Steep the Shoyu Tare to build the seasoning base for your bowls.**

Combine the soy sauce, mirin, sake, kombu, dried shiitake, and Worcestershire sauce in a small saucepan and bring to a bare simmer. Turn off the heat immediately before it boils to prevent the kombu from releasing a bitter slime, let it steep until cool, and strain. The home cook will be tempted to season the simmering broth cauldron; redirect your instinct, leave the broth entirely unsalted, and salt exclusively by this tare.
- 4. Mix and sheet the alkaline dough for your ramen noodles.**

Dissolve the 3 grams of baked baking soda and 3 grams of sea salt completely into the water, then slowly drizzle it into the bread flour while mixing vigorously. The dough will resemble coarse sand; press it into a ragged ball, rest for 30 minutes, then pass it through a pasta sheeter repeatedly on the widest setting until smooth before cutting to 1.5mm and resting in the fridge for 24 hours. The alkaline pH matters chemically, structurally altering the wheat for that requisite yellow hue and snap.

1. Boil the eggs for exactly six and a half minutes and marinate overnight.

Lower cold eggs into rapidly boiling water spiked with the white vinegar and set a timer for exactly 6 minutes and 30 seconds. Plunge them immediately into an ice water bath, peel carefully, and submerge in a mixture of 1 part tare to 3 parts water for exactly 12 hours to achieve the perfect bullseye-yolk: firm white, custard middle, and cold, gooey center.

2. Assemble the bowl with blistering hot broth, snappy noodles, and cold-sliced brisket.

Warm your ramen bowl with boiling water, discard the water, and add 2 tablespoons of tare. Boil a 130-gram portion of fresh noodles for 60 to 90 seconds, pour 350ml of the blisteringly hot oxtail paitan over the tare, and vigorously shake the noodles dry before folding them into the opaque broth. Arrange your cold-sliced brisket—never warm-slice it, or it will shred into pulled beef—alongside shredded raw cabbage, pickle spears, menma, halved ajitama, and scallions. Slurp aggressively.

CHEF'S NOTES

● **Your first home tonkotsu should taste like Daikokuya.**

Ramen has a half-life of five minutes. Have your mise en place entirely finished before you begin boiling noodles. Once the hot broth hits the tare and the noodles go in, you serve and slurp immediately. You should take one bite and say, 'YES, THIS IS EXACTLY WHAT LITTLE TOKYO TASTES LIKE.'



West Coast Yuzu Shio Ramen

柚子塩ラーメン

yuzu shio rāmen

There is a specific, uncompromising rhythm to a late-night ramen shop meal. The West Coast Yuzu Shio is a beautiful synthesis of strict Tokyo chintan discipline, the soft waters of the Pacific Northwest, and the floral bite of California Meyer lemons substituting for native yuzu. This isn't a quick weeknight dinner; it's a demanding weekend devotion to the grammar of ramen—a broth kept at an agonizingly gentle sub-simmer to maintain glass-like clarity, a tare heavily spiked with cold-infused citrus, and alkaline noodles boasting a defiant snap. You build it with military precision, and when you finally taste it, you'll know exactly what the counter at Little Tokyo tastes like.

INGREDIENTS

2 1/2 lb	chicken carcasses <i>cut into manageable pieces</i>	100 ml	chicken fat <i>cold</i>
14 oz	chicken wings	20 g	niboshi <i>heads and guts removed</i>
10 g	kombu	1 med	scallion <i>roughly chopped</i>
1 large	leek <i>green parts only, roughly chopped</i>	390 g	bread flour
3 slice	fresh ginger <i>thinly sliced</i>	10 g	whole wheat flour
1 small	garlic <i>smashed</i>	130 ml	water
3 l	filtered water	4 g	baked baking soda
2 1/2 tsp	sea salt	4 g	salt
2 tbsp	usukuchi shoyu	4 large	eggs <i>cold from the refrigerator</i>
1 1/2 tbsp	mirin	1 tbsp	white vinegar
1 tbsp	sake	1 lb	pork belly <i>rolled and tied</i>
50 ml	kombu water <i>cold</i>	1 cup	mizuna <i>washed and dried</i>
3 tbsp	Meyer lemon juice <i>freshly squeezed</i>	4 sheet	nori
1 whole	Meyer lemon <i>zested</i>		

PREPARATION

- **Bake the baking soda into kansui.**

Spread standard baking soda on a foil-lined sheet and bake at 350°F for exactly one hour to convert it into sodium carbonate, the strong alkali required for proper noodle texture.

- **Cure the perfect ramen egg.**

Boil cold eggs for exactly 6 minutes and 30 seconds, plunge into an ice bath, peel, and marinate in soy and mirin for a mandatory 12 hours to achieve the jammy bullseye yolk.

- **Prepare the cold-sliced chashu.**

Braise a rolled pork belly until tender, but chill it entirely overnight before slicing; warm pork shreds, while cold pork yields perfect structural rounds that melt cleanly upon assembly.

- **Synthesize the alkaline noodles.**

Dissolve the baked baking soda and salt into water, mix into the flours, step on the bagged dough to compress it, then sheet and cut to 1.2mm.

- **Extract the chintan broth.**

Vigorously blanch the chicken bones for 10 minutes to purge impurities, rinse clean, then submerge in soft water with aromatics, maintaining a strict 176–194°F sub-simmer for two hours for glass-like clarity.

- **Construct the yuzu shio tare.**

Burn off the alcohol from the mirin and sake, dissolve the salt and usukuchi shoyu, then let the mixture cool entirely to room temperature before whisking in the Meyer lemon juice and zest.

- **Steep the aroma oil.**

Gently heat cold chicken fat, cleaned niboshi, and scallions to a bare 176–194°F for 20 minutes to extract the aromatics without drawing out bitter tannins.

INSTRUCTIONS

1. **Pre-warm the bowls.**

Fill heavy ceramic ramen bowls with boiling water, let them sit for a minute to absorb the heat, then dump the water and wipe them bone-dry so they don't leech heat from the soup.

1. Build the base.

Pour two tablespoons of the yuzu shio tare and two teaspoons of the aroma oil into the bottom of the warm, empty bowl.

2. Create the emulsion.

Ladle the near-boiling tori chintan broth into the bowl, allowing the force of the liquid hitting the tare and oil to create a momentary micro-emulsion.

3. Execute the noodle fold.

Boil the alkaline noodles for exactly 90 seconds, shake them completely dry in a strainer to avoid diluting the soup, and slide them into the broth, folding them over once to create a neat wave.

4. Construct the landscape.

Arrange the cold-sliced chashu along the left perimeter, the halved jammy egg on the right, tuck a nori sheet in the back, and place a high mound of mizuna in the dead center.

5. Deliver the final zest.

Hold a microplane directly over the steaming bowl and swipe the fresh Meyer lemon peel three times, creating an intense, floral cloud of citrus aroma that hits the diner before they even pick up their chopsticks.

CHEF'S NOTES

● **Respect the separation of church and state.**

A common home-cook sin is seasoning the broth in the pot; ramen broth must remain deliberately under-salted, relying entirely on the highly concentrated tare in the bowl for its salinity and complex umami.

● **Agitation dictates clarity.**

While a heavy tonkotsu demands split trotters and a violent rolling boil to emulsify fats into a milky-white suspension, a true tori chintan requires rigorous temperature control and a bare tremor to prevent the proteins from permanently clouding the liquid.



Tsuna-Kotsu Ramen

鮪骨ラーメン

tsuna-kotsu rāmen

Born from the refuse of Brooklyn fish markets and validated by the ramen purists of Shin-Yokohama, tsuna-kotsu is a masterclass in culinary violence. It takes discarded tuna heads and subjects them to a brutal, rolling boil until the fat and collagen shatter into a milky, soul-coating emulsion. This is a formidable weekend project that demands deep respect for the craft—heavy bones, absolute pH control, and a beautifully layered tare. Get it right, drop in that twelve-hour egg, and the payoff tastes exactly like the late-night counter in Little Tokyo.

INGREDIENTS

5 lb	tuna bones, collars, and heads <i>scrubbed meticulously clean of blood under cold running water</i>	5 g	baked baking soda
1 large	onion <i>halved with skin on</i>	5 g	salt
2 med	garlic <i>heads halved horizontally</i>	135 g	water
1 med	ginger <i>knob sliced thick</i>	4 large	eggs <i>cold from the fridge</i>
1 gal	water <i>plus more boiling water for replenishing</i>	1/2 cup	soy sauce
15 g	kombu	1/2 cup	mirin
1 cup	water	1/2 cup	water
1/2 cup	sea salt	1 lb	tuna belly <i>generously salted, rested 30 minutes, and patted dry</i>
2 tbsp	light soy sauce	2 cup	neutral oil
2 tbsp	sake	1 small	garlic clove <i>smashed</i>
1 tbsp	mirin	1 small	thyme <i>sprig</i>
400 g	bread flour	1 med	scallions <i>bunch finely chopped</i>
100 g	cake flour	1 tbsp	toasted sesame seeds
		2 tsp	yuzu kosho

INSTRUCTIONS

- 1. Roast the cleaned tuna bones on heavy baking sheets at 450°F for forty minutes.**

You must drive out the trimethylamine; get them sizzling and deeply charred on the edges to transform any potential fishiness into deep, roasted umami.

- 1. Transfer the roasted bones to a large pot, cover with cold water by at least two inches, and bring to a violent, rolling boil.**

Do not reduce to a simmer. This brutal mechanical agitation is mandatory; it is the physical engine that forces the melting tuna fat to emulsify with the extracted gelatin. Clarity here is a failure of emulsion.

- 2. Add the halved onion, garlic heads, and ginger after four hours of relentless boiling.**

Keep the pot boiling for another six to eight hours, replenishing with boiling water every hour to keep the bones submerged. In the final two hours, stop adding water and let it reduce until the liquid is milky, opaque, and viscous like heavy cream.

- 3. Strain the broth through a fine-mesh sieve, pressing the solids firmly to extract every last drop of fat and gelatin.**

Do not skim the fat, because the fat is the flavor. Leave the broth entirely unseasoned; the home cook will be tempted to salt the stock pot, but you must rely exclusively on the tare.

- 4. Steep the kombu in one cup of cold water for four hours, then gently heat to 140°F before discarding the kelp.**

Dissolve the sea salt, light soy sauce, sake, and one tablespoon of mirin into this warm dashi. This concentrated shio-kombu tare is the sole source of seasoning for your bowl.

- 5. Bake standard baking soda on a foil-lined sheet at 350°F for exactly one hour to create your alkaline powder.**

Dissolve five grams of this baked baking soda and five grams of salt into 135 grams of water, then slowly drizzle into the combined flours in a stand mixer.

- 6. Transfer the dry, coarse dough into a heavy-duty bag and step on it to compress it into a sheet, then run it through a hand-crank pasta machine until you can cut extra-fine, straight noodles.**

Dust generously with cornstarch and let sit in the fridge for twenty-four hours so the alkaline flavor mellows and the texture firms.

- 1. Lower cold eggs into boiling water for exactly six minutes and thirty seconds, then immediately shock them in an ice bath.**

Peel and submerge the eggs in a marinade of a half cup each of soy sauce, mirin, and water for exactly twelve hours. The bullseye-yolk is the point.

- 2. Submerge the salted tuna belly, smashed garlic, and thyme in neutral oil and bake at 180°F for forty-five minutes to one hour until incredibly tender.**

Chill the tuna completely in the oil. You must cold-slice and never warm-slice; warm confit will shatter, so slice it cold and let the heat of the broth warm it in the bowl.

- 3. Warm your serving bowls with boiling water, dry them perfectly, and add two tablespoons of tare to the base of each.**

Drop the fresh noodles into rapidly boiling water for forty-five seconds to achieve a firm snap (katame).

- 4. Pour twelve ounces of scalding hot tsuna-kotsu broth over the tare to mix the seasoning into the emulsion, then vigorously drain the noodles and fold them neatly into the soup.**

Top with cold-sliced maguro confit, a halved ajitama, scallions, sesame seeds, and a mandatory dab of yuzu kosho on the lip of the bowl to slice through the heavy fat.



A5 Wagyu & Matcha Tori Paitan

抹茶鶏白湯

matcha tori paitan

This is a meticulously engineered collision of animal fat and botanical astringency. Designed to bridge American cravings and Japanese exactitude, it demands the violence of a rolling boil to beat chicken carcasses into milky submission, balanced against the grassy snap of whisked culinary matcha. Crowned with raw, web-laced A5 Wagyu that melts gently into the broth's residual heat, it is a demanding, project-oriented bowl that rewards the patient with the unmistakable electricity of late-night Tokyo.

INGREDIENTS

1500 g	chicken carcasses and necks	4 g	salt
1500 g	chicken feet	150 ml	warm water
1 large	brown onion <i>unpeeled and halved</i>	4 large	eggs <i>cold</i>
1 whole	garlic <i>halved crosswise</i>	1 tbsp	vinegar
1 large	Yukon Gold potato <i>peeled and quartered</i>	1/2 cup	soy sauce
6 l	water	1 cup	water
15 g	dried kombu	1/4 cup	mirin
15 g	dried baby sardines <i>heads and guts removed</i>	2 tbsp	premium culinary matcha powder
200 ml	water	4 tbsp	heavy cream
150 ml	shiro shoyu	12 oz	A5 Wagyu beef <i>sliced paper-thin while partially frozen</i>
30 g	sea salt	1/2 med	red onion <i>finely diced</i>
20 ml	mirin	4 med	scallions <i>thinly sliced</i>
400 g	bread flour	1 cup	fried burdock root
4 g	baked baking soda		

PREPARATION

- **Bake the baking soda for the alkaline noodles.**

Spread standard baking soda on a foil-lined sheet and bake at 350°F for exactly 1 hour. This drives off moisture and carbon dioxide, converting it into a much stronger alkali required for the noodles.

- **Steep the aromatics for the tare.**

Combine 200 ml water, the dried kombu, and the cleaned dried sardines in a jar. Let this steep in the refrigerator for 12 hours before heating.

- **Marinate the soft-yolked eggs.**

Lower cold eggs into boiling water for exactly 6 minutes and 30 seconds. Plunge into an ice bath, peel, and submerge in a marinade of 1 cup water, soy sauce, and 1/4 cup mirin for 12 hours. The bullseye-yolk is the point.

- **Build the alkaline noodle dough.**

Dissolve the baked baking soda and 4 g salt into 150 ml warm water. Trickle into the bread flour, mixing rapidly with your fingers until it resembles coarse sand. Rest in a sealed bag for 30 minutes, then stomp it flat with your feet.

- **Sheet and cut the noodles.**

Pass the stiff dough through a pasta machine on its widest setting. Fold and roll 5 to 6 times until impeccably smooth, roll to your desired thickness, cut, and dust heavily with cornstarch.

INSTRUCTIONS

1. **Blanch the bones to remove impurities.**

Place the chicken carcasses and feet in a large pot, cover with cold water, and bring to a rapid boil over high heat. Let boil violently for 5 minutes until the water turns brown and foams heavily.

2. **Scrub the bones completely clean.**

Dump the contents of the pot into the sink and discard the foul water. Scrub every carcass and foot under cold running water, digging out all maroon blood lines and lungs. Wash the stockpot until pristine.

3. **Force the emulsion with a rolling boil.**

Return the clean bones to the pot, cover with 6 liters of fresh filtered water, and bring to a boil. Do not lower the heat. Maintain a violent, rolling boil for 8 hours, adding boiling water as needed to keep the bones submerged. The mechanical agitation forces the melting fat into a milky-white suspension.

1. Thicken the broth using the vege-pota method.

At hour 7, drop in the halved onion, garlic, and potato. Continue the violent boil for 1 more hour until the potato breaks down completely, leaving the broth starchy and creamy.

2. Strain the tori paitan.

Pass the broth through a fine-mesh chinois into a clean container, pressing hard on the bones to extract all collagen and liquid. Discard the solids.

3. Finish the shiro shoyu tare.

Gently heat your steeped kombu and sardine liquid over medium-low heat. Right before it simmers, remove the kombu. Simmer the sardines for 5 minutes, strain, and whisk in the sea salt, shiro shoyu, and 20 ml mirin until dissolved.

4. Whisk the matcha slurry directly in the bowls.

Warm four ceramic bowls with boiling water, empty them, and wipe completely dry. In each bowl, combine 35 ml of the tare, 1 tablespoon of heavy cream, and 1 1/2 teaspoons of matcha powder. Whisk aggressively with a bamboo chasen or frother into a smooth, dark green paste.

5. Froth the hot matcha broth.

Ensure the strained tori paitan is at a rolling boil on the stove. Pour 300 ml directly over the matcha paste in each bowl and whisk vigorously until the soup transforms into a vibrant, neon-green liquid with a cappuccino-like head.

6. Drop the alkaline noodles.

Boil the fresh noodles for 1 minute in unsalted water. Drain them aggressively, shaking the basket hard to remove excess moisture so it does not dilute the emulsified broth. Fold neatly into the center of the bowls.

7. Drape the Wagyu to finish.

Crown the noodles with the raw, paper-thin slices of A5 Wagyu. The radiant 95°C heat of the broth will melt the intramuscular fat gently. Garnish with a halved marinated egg, red onion, scallions, and fried burdock root.

CHEF'S NOTES

- **Leave the broth unsalted.**

Seasoning lives strictly in the tare. Attempting to salt the tori paitan in the stockpot will destroy the balance of the composed bowl and ruin the final assembly.

- **Paper-thin beef is non-negotiable.**

Thick slices of Wagyu will remain raw, chewy, and unappetizing. The meat must be shaved thinly enough that the ambient heat of the broth cooks it in the bowl.

- **Do not let the boil drop to a simmer.**

A gentle French simmer will yield a clear, greasy chicken stock. The violent mechanical shear of a rolling boil is entirely mandatory to emulsify the fat and collagen into a proper paitan.



Chapter 4 — Sides: The Ramen-Shop Counter Menu

The definitive, late-night counter sides designed to cut through rich broths and make brilliant use of the kitchen's odds and ends.

At 11:30 p.m. at the laminate counter, the deep fryer hisses, and the line settles into a rhythm. Before the bowl arrives, before you plunge your face into a cloud of pork fat and alkaline steam, you need a preamble: a cold glass of draft beer,

the scrape of the gyoza spatula, something fried to cut the richness. This is the domain of the side hustle: blistering gyoza with crispy, lacquered bottoms, double-dredged karaage, and chilled cucumbers.

This menu is also a masterclass in kitchen economy. Nothing goes to waste. The charred, ragged ends of the chashu belly get folded into wok-scorched chahan, and cubed end-pieces of chashu are piled high over steaming rice. These dishes aren't filler. The bowls empty out, a fresh round of cold beer hits the bar, and the fry cooks keep moving.





Schmaltz-Seared Hanetsuki Gyoza

羽根つき餃子

hanetsuki gyōza

A ramen shop side dish isn't an afterthought; it's a direct extension of the same obsession that built the broth. This winged gyoza—born in Kamata, bound by a shattering lattice of starch, and enriched with the very same rendered chicken fat that perfumes a proper shoyu ramen—demands that exact respect. We rigorously extract the meat's proteins to trap the fat, we drain the cabbage mercilessly, and we listen closely for the violent, high-pitched crackle of the sear. Don't cut corners here.

INGREDIENTS

1 lb	raw chicken skin and fat	1 small	garlic clove <i>finely grated</i>
2 med	green onions <i>green parts only, roughly chopped</i>	3 cup	green cabbage <i>finely minced</i>
1 med	fresh ginger <i>thumb-sized piece, sliced</i>	1 tsp	kosher salt
1 lb	fatty ground pork <i>cold</i>	1 cup	nira <i>garlic chives, finely chopped</i>
1 1/2 tsp	kosher salt	40 large	thick gyoza wrappers <i>mochi-mochi style preferred</i>
3 tbsp	concentrated chicken stock <i>cold</i>	150 ml	hot water <i>around 140 degrees F</i>
2 tbsp	chiyu <i>liquid, cooled</i>	1 1/2 tsp	all-purpose flour
1 tbsp	soy sauce	1 1/2 tsp	potato starch
1 tbsp	oyster sauce	1 tbsp	chiyu
1 tsp	toasted sesame oil	1 tsp	toasted sesame oil
1 tsp	fresh ginger <i>grated</i>		

PREPARATION

- **Render the aromatic chicken fat.**

Place the raw chicken skin and fat in a cold, wide skillet over medium-low heat. As it begins to pool, add the scallion greens and ginger slices. Maintain a gentle extraction for 15 to 20 minutes until the skins are deeply browned and the oil is a brilliant, clear gold. Strain through a fine-mesh sieve and let cool. This is your chiyu.

- **Draw the excess water from the cabbage.**

Toss the minced cabbage with 1 teaspoon of kosher salt in a bowl and let sit for 20 minutes. Transfer to a clean kitchen towel and wring it out mercilessly. If you think you have squeezed out enough water, squeeze it again; excess moisture is the enemy of a proper pan sear.

INSTRUCTIONS

1. **Extract the proteins to engineer a sticky meat matrix.**

In a cold bowl, combine the cold ground pork and 1 1/2 teaspoons of kosher salt. Knead vigorously with your hand for 3 to 5 minutes until the meat turns pale white, becomes incredibly sticky, and pulls away from the bowl in a cohesive, stringy mass. This step is non-negotiable for trapping the fat.

2. **Emulsify the liquids and fold in the aromatics.**

Incrementally beat the cold chicken stock into the meat, 1 tablespoon at a time. Add the 2 tablespoons of liquid chiyu, soy sauce, oyster sauce, 1 teaspoon sesame oil, grated ginger, and garlic, kneading until a glossy emulsion forms. Gently fold in the squeezed-dry cabbage and nira without over-mixing.

3. **Rest the filling to solidify the fats.**

Cover the bowl tightly with plastic wrap and refrigerate for at least 60 minutes. The fats must be solid so the mixture is firm, ensuring it won't bleed out and ruin the wrapper's seal.

4. **Pleat and seal the gyoza.**

Place a scant tablespoon of filling in the center of a wrapper. Wet the top semi-circle, fold in half, and pinch exactly at the top center. Create 3 to 4 pleats down each side, pressing firmly to seal, then press the bottom gently against your cutting board to create a flat seat for the sear.

5. **Sear the dumplings in schmaltz.**

Heat a heavy 10-inch skillet over medium-high heat and coat the bottom with 1 tablespoon of chiyu. Pack the gyoza tightly into the pan in a circular, interlocking sunflower pattern. Sear for 1 to 2 minutes until the bottoms turn pale golden.

1. Steam and fry the hanetsuki wing.

Whisk the hot water, flour, and potato starch vigorously, then pour the slurry evenly over the dumplings and immediately cover with a tight lid. Reduce heat to medium and steam for 4 to 5 minutes. Remove the lid, increase heat slightly, and listen closely; when the low boil transitions to an aggressive, high-pitched crackle, drizzle 1 teaspoon of sesame oil around the perimeter. Fry for 1 final minute, then confidently flip the pan over onto a plate to serve.

CHEF'S NOTES

● **Source true potato starch, not cornstarch.**

American cornstarch turns gummy or powdery when used for the wing slurry. Japanese katakuriko (potato starch) provides the essential, glass-like snap to the lattice.

● **Utilize chashu trim if you have it.**

Since you are likely making the book's signature cold-sliced chashu, finely mince any end pieces and fold them into the gyoza filling alongside the raw pork for an incredible layer of braised, soy-heavy depth.

● **Use nira, not standard American chives.**

Regular chives are too delicate. Nira (garlic chives) bring the pungent, sulfuric bite necessary to cut through the heavy pork and chicken fat.



Potato-Starch Karaage with Toasted Garlic Caramel

唐揚げ

kah-rah-ah-geh

In the same way a proper tonkotsu broth demands an 18-hour rolling boil to physically force fat into suspension, a proper ramen-shop karaage is an exercise in physical chemistry. There are no shortcuts here. Do not remove the skin. Do not substitute flour for potato starch, and above all, do not skip the two-stage fry. The starch yields a jagged, glass-like lattice. The mandatory resting period gently cooks the meat without drying it out, while the final 400°F flash-fry obliterates surface moisture. It sets the crust so firmly that it withstands a toss in boiling, sticky toasted garlic caramel without instantly turning to mush.

INGREDIENTS

1 1/2 lb	boneless skin-on chicken thighs <i>scored for uniform thickness and cut into 2-inch pieces</i>	2 tbsp	neutral oil
2 tbsp	Japanese soy sauce	8 med cloves	garlic <i>very finely minced</i>
1 tbsp	sake	1/4 cup	Japanese soy sauce
1 tbsp	mirin	1/4 cup	mirin
1 tsp	toasted sesame oil	2 tbsp	sake
3 med cloves	garlic <i>finely grated into a paste</i>	3 tbsp	dark brown sugar <i>packed</i>
1 med piece	fresh ginger <i>peeled and finely grated into a paste</i>	1 tbsp	rice vinegar
1/2 tsp	kosher salt	1/4 cup	Kewpie mayonnaise
1/4 tsp	black pepper <i>freshly ground</i>	1/4 cup	buttermilk
1 1/2 cup	potato starch	5 med leaves	fresh shiso leaves <i>very finely minced</i>
1 qt	neutral oil	1/2 tsp	garlic powder
		1/2 tsp	onion powder
		1/4 tsp	black pepper

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Massage the marinade into the meat.

In a large mixing bowl, combine the 2 tablespoons of soy sauce, 1 tablespoon sake, 1 tablespoon mirin, sesame oil, grated garlic, grated ginger, kosher salt, and 1/4 teaspoon black pepper. Add the chicken pieces and aggressively massage the liquid into the meat for 2 to 3 minutes until fully absorbed.

2. Rest the chicken for exactly 30 minutes at room temperature.

Do not leave it overnight. Prolonged osmotic pressure will draw moisture out of the muscle fibers, resulting in a tough chew.

1. Dredge in potato starch and hydrate the crust.

Pour the potato starch into a shallow tray. Scoop the starch over the marinated chicken, pressing firmly so it adheres to every crevice. Shake off the loose excess and place the pieces on a wire rack. Refrigerate for 30 minutes so the chicken's moisture gently hydrates the innermost layer of starch, gluing the crust to the meat.

2. Toast the minced garlic for the caramel.

In a small saucepan over medium-low heat, continuously stir the 2 tablespoons of neutral oil and the minced garlic. Toast until it hits a deep, golden-brown hue that smells intensely nutty. Do not let it burn.

3. Build and reduce the toasted garlic caramel.

Immediately halt the garlic's frying process by pouring in the 1/4 cup soy sauce, 1/4 cup mirin, 2 tablespoons sake, and dark brown sugar. Bring to a rapid boil over medium-high heat for 4 to 5 minutes until it reduces to a viscous, sticky syrup. Remove from heat and stir in the rice vinegar.

4. Execute the low-temperature first fry.

Heat 2 inches of neutral oil in a heavy-bottomed Dutch oven to 350°F. Lower half the chicken in, allowing the oil temperature to drop to 325°F. Fry undisturbed for 3 to 4 minutes. The crust will look pale and blonde—this is correct.

5. Remove the chicken and rest for exactly 3 minutes.

This is the secret of ramen-ya karaage. The residual surface heat conducts inward to perfectly cook the center, while internal moisture is driven outward to the crust.

6. Flash fry at 400°F to shatter the crust.

While the chicken rests, crank the heat until the oil reaches a violent 400°F. Drop the rested chicken back in for 60 to 90 seconds. The outward-migrating moisture instantly evaporates, leaving a blistered, shatteringly crisp crust.

7. Toss the hot karaage in the garlic caramel.

Reheat the caramel if needed. Place the piping-hot, twice-fried chicken into a large steel bowl, pour the hot caramel over it, and toss vigorously. The jagged ridges will catch the sticky molasses without turning soggy. Plate immediately.

1. Serve with optional Shiso Ranch.

Whisk the Kewpie mayonnaise, buttermilk, minced shiso, garlic powder, onion powder, and remaining 1/4 teaspoon black pepper. Serve alongside the chicken as the ultimate counterpoint to a bowl of tonkotsu.



Flash-Fried Brussels Sprouts with Apricot-Curry Gastrique

芽キャベツの素揚げ 杏カレー甘酢和え

Mekyabetsu no suage, anzu kare-amazu ae

If the tonkotsu broth is the heavy, relentless bassline of a ramen-shop meal, this side dish is the sharp snare drum. Born in the American diaspora but rooted deeply in uncompromising Japanese izakaya grammar, these sprouts are bare-fried until their outer leaves shatter and turn nearly black. Tossed in a violently acidic, curry-spiked apricot gastrique, they provide a necessary textural reset. This is a dish that respects the time, the ingredients, and the dedicated cook—a palate cleanser that cuts through the fat and demands as much reverence as the bowl itself.

INGREDIENTS

3 med	dried plums (prunes) <i>pitted and minced to a paste</i>	1 lb	Brussels sprouts <i>trimmed and loose outer leaves removed</i>
3 tbsp	apricot preserves	1 qt	canola or rice bran oil
1/4 cup	Japanese black vinegar (kurozu)	1 tsp	kosher salt
2 tbsp	dark soy sauce	1/2 med	Fuji apple <i>julienned into razor-thin matchsticks and kept in acidulated water</i>
1 tbsp	raw cane sugar	1/4 cup	katsuobushi (bonito flakes)
1 1/2 tsp	Japanese curry powder	1 tbsp	white sesame seeds <i>toasted</i>
1 small clove	garlic <i>grated on a microplane</i>	1 tbsp	fried garlic chips
1 tbsp	neutral oil		

PREPARATION

- **Dry the sprouts obsessively.**

Wash the Brussels sprouts but dry them with absolute paranoia. Any residual water trapped in the leaves will cause a violent and dangerous eruption when they are plunged into the hot oil.

- **Score the dense core.**

Using a paring knife, make a 1/4-inch deep cross cut into the bottom core of every single sprout. This uncompromising step allows the boiling oil to penetrate the center, steaming it from the inside out before the fragile exterior burns.

INSTRUCTIONS

- 1. Bloom the curry and garlic in oil.**

In a small saucepan over medium-low heat, warm the tablespoon of neutral oil, then add the grated garlic and curry powder. Sauté for exactly 45 to 60 seconds until the spices bloom and the kitchen smells fiercely earthy, taking care not to burn the garlic.

1. Deglaze and build the gastrique.

Instantly stop the frying by pouring in the black vinegar and soy sauce—the mixture will violently bubble. Stir in the apricot preserves, minced plum paste, and sugar, then lower the heat to a gentle simmer for 5 to 7 minutes until the fruit breaks down and it reduces to a glossy, sticky syrup.

2. Prepare the oil for bare frying.

In a heavy stockpot or Dutch oven, heat three inches of frying oil to exactly 330°F (165°C). Use a thermometer and do not guess; precise temperature management is non-negotiable for this technique.

3. Fry the Brussels sprouts until nearly black.

Working in two batches so the oil temperature doesn't plummet, carefully lower the impeccably dry sprouts into the oil. Fry for 5 to 6 minutes until the outer leaves undergo an intense Maillard reaction, shattering and turning a deep, dark mahogany bordering on black.

4. Drain, salt, and toss with the gastrique.

Remove the sprouts with a spider skimmer, transfer to a wire rack set over a sheet tray, and immediately toss with a heavy pinch of kosher salt while glistening hot. Move the sprouts to a mixing bowl, drizzle with 3 to 4 tablespoons of the gastrique, and toss aggressively to coat every crevice.

5. Garnish and serve immediately.

Transfer the coated sprouts to a shallow serving bowl and top with the julienned apple matchsticks, toasted sesame seeds, and fried garlic chips. Crown the dish with a handful of katsuobushi, allowing the residual heat from the sprouts to make the bonito flakes writhe and dance as you carry it to the table.

CHEF'S NOTES

● **Source proper vinegar.**

Authentic Japanese Kurozu is deeply complex and fermented in ceramic pots in the sun. If unavailable at your local pan-Asian grocer, Chinese Chinkiang vinegar or a blend of balsamic and apple cider vinegar makes a suitable substitute.

- **Manage your timeline.**

If you are dedicating your weekend to an eighteen-hour tonkotsu broth, this side dish is designed to be prepped during the downtime. The gastrique can be made days in advance, leaving only the fifteen minutes of active frying right before you assemble the final ramen bowls.



'Octo-Vin' Chicken Wings

手羽先の唐揚げ

tebasaki karaage

A proper bowl of ramen is a heavy, lipid-rich anchor that demands a sharp, necessary counterweight. You do not survive a late-night counter meal at Daikokuya without a cold beer and the biting acid of a side dish to cut the fat and reset the palate. These wings, tossed in a legendary, hyper-aggressive vinaigrette born from repurposed konbu and Momofuku ingenuity, serve exactly that architectural purpose. But there are no shortcuts here: you will brine, you will steam, you will air-dry overnight, and only then will you fry. The result is a skin that

shatters like glass, yielding a blast of hand-chopped garlic, ginger, and unapologetic acid that wakes up every deadened nerve ending in your mouth.

INGREDIENTS

3 lb	whole chicken wings <i>separated into drumettes and flats, wingtips saved for stock</i>	1 1/2 tbsp	granulated sugar
4 cup	lukewarm water	2 tbsp	fresh garlic <i>finely and evenly chopped by hand</i>
1/2 cup	granulated sugar	2 tbsp	fresh ginger <i>peeled, finely and evenly chopped by hand</i>
1/2 cup	kosher salt	1 med	fresh Thai bird's eye chili <i>seeded and finely chopped</i>
4 cup	neutral oil	1/4 tsp	Asian toasted sesame oil
1/4 cup	rice wine vinegar	1/4 tsp	black pepper <i>freshly ground</i>
1/4 cup	usukuchi shoyu		
2 tbsp	neutral oil		

PREPARATION

- **Mince aromatics by hand.**

Do not use a garlic press or a microplane for the ginger. Crushing the cell walls too violently releases an acrid blast of allicin that will ruin the balance of the sauce.

Utilize knife skills to create a fine, even brunoise.

INSTRUCTIONS

- 1. Dissolve the brine.**

In a large stockpot or commercial food-safe container, whisk the lukewarm water, sugar, and kosher salt together until the crystals are completely dissolved.

1. Submerge and chill.

Submerge the chicken wings entirely in the liquid, cover the container, and refrigerate for a minimum of 1 hour, but absolutely no longer than 6 hours to prevent the texture from becoming hammy and cured.

2. Rinse the wings.

Remove the wings from the brine, discard the liquid, and rinse the wings thoroughly under cold water to remove the excess surface salt.

3. Steam the fat away.

Set up a steamer basket over a pot of simmering water. Arrange the wings in a single layer and cover, leaving the lid ever so slightly ajar to prevent the heat from becoming too violent. Steam for 40 to 45 minutes to fully cook the meat and render the problematic subcutaneous fat.

4. Air-dry the skin overnight.

Carefully transfer the hot wings to a wire cooling rack set over a baking sheet. Place them completely uncovered in the refrigerator for at least 2 hours, but ideally 12 to 14 hours, allowing the dry cold air to tighten the skin into a leathery pellicle.

5. Temper the meat.

Remove the wings from the refrigerator 30 minutes before frying to take the chill off.

6. Build the Octo-Vin.

In a lidded jar, combine the chopped garlic, ginger, chili, rice wine vinegar, usukuchi, the 2 tablespoons of neutral oil, sesame oil, sugar, and black pepper. Shake violently until the sugar is dissolved and the liquids emulsify.

7. Heat the oil.

In a heavy-bottomed Dutch oven or deep-fryer, heat the 4 cups of neutral oil to 350°F to 375°F. Use a thermometer; guessing will ruin your weekend's work.

8. Fry to a shatter.

Working in batches so the temperature doesn't drop, carefully lower the dry wings into the hot oil. Fry for 6 to 8 minutes until the skin is a deep, lacquered mahogany brown and distinctly crisp.

1. Drain briefly.

Transfer the fried wings to a plate lined with paper towels for exactly one minute to drain excess grease.

2. Dress and serve.

While still blazing hot, transfer the wings to a large stainless steel bowl. Pour half the Octo-Vin over the top and toss vigorously until the garlic and ginger are evenly distributed and clinging to the crisp skin. Add more dressing as desired, and serve immediately alongside an ice-cold Japanese lager.

CHEF'S NOTES

● **Do not bake these wings.**

Baking raw wings traps rendering fat against the pan, resulting in a flabby underbelly. The steaming and chilling phases are non-negotiable for achieving a restaurant-quality skin that shatters like glass.

● **Sourcing usukuchi.**

Japanese light soy sauce (usukuchi) is saltier and lighter in color than standard dark soy sauce. Do not substitute thick dark soy sauces as a 1:1 replacement, or the salt density will be wrong and the chicken will stain an unappetizing black.



Smashed Kyuri Pickles with Spiced Rice Vinegar and Dill

たたききゅうり

tataki kyuri

When you are hunched over a counter at eleven at night, face deep in a bowl of violently boiled, fat-slicked tonkotsu, you need a palate cleanser that hits back. This is not a delicate, ten-minute side salad. It is an aggressive, unforgiving hybrid of a New York deli dill pickle and a hyper-textured Japanese tataki kyuri. It takes an hour to draw the water out and another twenty-four for the kombu-laced brine to claw its way back in, but the resulting crunch will cut straight through the heavy lipids of the broth and bring you back to life.

INGREDIENTS

6 med	Persian cucumbers <i>washed, completely dried, and extreme ends trimmed</i>	1 large	garlic clove <i>peeled and grated to a micro-paste</i>
12 g	Diamond Crystal kosher salt	1 med knob	fresh ginger <i>peeled and grated to a micro-paste</i>
1/2 cup	unseasoned rice vinegar	1/2 med	lemon <i>zested</i>
1 tbsp	granulated sugar	1/2 tsp	gochugaru or ichimi togarashi
1 tbsp	pure toasted sesame oil	1 large bunch	fresh dill <i>separated into stems and fronds</i>
1 tbsp	shio kombu		
1 tbsp	white sesame seeds		

INSTRUCTIONS

- 1. Peel a thin ring of dark green skin away from the stem end of each cucumber.**
This area harbors bitter compounds that will muddy the final flavor of your brine.
- 2. Strike the cucumbers firmly with a wooden pestle or the flat side of a heavy cleaver until they audibly crack.**
Do not pulverize them into mush; you want the vegetable to split longitudinally into ragged segments while largely holding its shape.
- 3. Drop your tools and tear the fractured cucumbers into bite-sized pieces by hand.**
Hand-tearing respects the natural fissures created by the blunt force, yielding jagged surfaces that grip the brine exponentially better than a clean knife cut.
- 4. Toss the torn cucumbers aggressively with the kosher salt in a colander and let sit over a bowl at room temperature for exactly one hour.**
This hypertonic environment forcefully pulls the water out of the cucumber's cellular structure, preventing it from diluting your brine later.

- 1. While the cucumbers weep, toast the sesame seeds in a dry skillet over medium heat until deeply golden brown and popping.**

Immediately transfer them to a mortar and pestle and lightly crush them to release their lipid-bound aromatic oils.

- 2. Squeeze the rested cucumbers firmly by the handful to expel the drawn moisture, discarding the liquid.**

Do not rinse them; you want that residual salt and the dense, deflated, highly crunchy structure left behind.

- 3. Whisk the rice vinegar, sugar, sesame oil, crushed sesame seeds, garlic, ginger, lemon zest, chili flakes, and shio kombu together in a non-reactive storage container.**

Ensure the sugar is fully dissolved, then bruise the reserved dill stems by twisting them slightly and submerge them entirely in the liquid.

- 4. Submerge the dehydrated cucumbers into the aggressive brine, seal, and refrigerate for a minimum of 24 hours.**

Press a layer of plastic wrap directly against the liquid surface to keep them fully submerged. Over the next day, the shio kombu will rehydrate and release its glutamates while the cucumbers absorb the flavor matrix.

- 5. Discard the dill stems, toss the cold pickles with a handful of finely chopped fresh dill fronds, and serve immediately.**

Serve in small, chilled bowls alongside a steaming bowl of ramen to reset the palate.

CHEF'S NOTES

- **Do not skip the shio kombu.**

This salted kelp is the umami engine of the dish, providing the necessary savory depth to stand up to a bowl of tonkotsu ramen. If it absolutely cannot be sourced, mix 1 teaspoon of soy sauce with a heavy pinch of MSG to replicate the glutamate load.

- **Timing is everything.**

Execute the smash, salt draw, and brine assembly the day before serving, ideally alongside the preparation of your ramen tare and 12-hour marinated egg.



Flash-Fried Crispy Nasu with White Sesame and Burnt Mayu

茄子の素揚げ 白ごまと黒マー油

nasu no su-age shirogoma to kuro mayu

At 11 PM under the neon hum of a Little Tokyo ramen shop, the sides need to stand up to the violent umami of a tonkotsu broth. This isn't a breezy weeknight vegetable; it's a structural masterpiece built on the uncompromising grammar of the ramen counter. You're going to flash-fry Japanese eggplant so it yields perfectly to the bite, lay it over a nutty, rich sesame puree, and drag it through black garlic oil you've

deliberately pushed past the point of comfort. It takes nerve to carbonize garlic, but that astringent, jet-black depth is exactly what cuts through the fat and makes the whole damn thing sing.

INGREDIENTS

1 large	head of garlic <i>peeled and sliced uniformly to a 1mm thickness</i>	2 tbsp	warm water
1/2 cup	rendered lard	4 med	Japanese eggplants <i>trimmed, cut into 3-inch batons, skin scored in a tight diagonal crosshatch, and thoroughly dried</i>
1/4 cup	toasted sesame oil	1 qt	neutral frying oil
1/4 cup	shiro nerigoma	1 pinch	fine sea salt
1 tbsp	soy sauce	1 tsp	shichimi togarashi
1 tbsp	unseasoned rice vinegar	2 med	scallions <i>green parts only, sliced razor-thin on a sharp bias</i>
2 tsp	granulated sugar	1 tbsp	white sesame seeds <i>toasted</i>
1 tbsp	mentsuyu		

PREPARATION

- **Score the eggplant using hidden knife cuts.**

The diagonal crosshatch pattern, known as kakushi-bōchō, isn't just aesthetic; it severs tough skin fibers and ensures rapid heat penetration so the interior turns custardy in seconds.

INSTRUCTIONS

- 1. Melt the lard over medium-low heat until it barely shimmers.**

Use a small, heavy-bottomed saucepan. You are looking for roughly 200°F (90°C).

- 1. Fry the garlic to extract the golden, sweet aromatics.**
Add the uniform garlic slices and stir continuously. As soon as they hit a light, golden brown, use a slotted spoon to extract exactly one-third of the chips to a paper towel-lined plate.
- 2. Push the remaining garlic to a deep roasted brown to build depth.**
Keep cooking the remaining garlic until it hits a dark, coffee-bean brown, then pull another half of what's left in the pan to the plate.
- 3. Carbonize the final batch of garlic to forge the astringent bitterness.**
Hold your nerve here and let the final third of the garlic smoke lightly until it is entirely, unmistakably pitch black, then pull the pan from the heat immediately and remove the chips to cool.
- 4. Pulverize the fried garlic and emulsify the oils.**
Grind all three stages of the fried garlic into a fine powder using a Japanese mortar or a stick blender, then stream in the cooled, rendered lard from the pan along with the toasted sesame oil until it forms a silky, jet-black oil.
- 5. Whisk the sesame puree components until smooth and glossy.**
In a bowl, vigorously whisk the shiro nerigoma, soy sauce, rice vinegar, sugar, and mentsuyu; it will seize up at first, so slowly stream in the warm water until it relaxes into the consistency of thick hummus.
- 6. Heat the neutral frying oil to exactly 350°F (180°C).**
Temperature control is absolute; if the oil is too cold, the eggplant becomes a greasy sponge, and if it is too hot, the exterior burns before the flesh cooks.
- 7. Flash-fry the eggplant batons skin-side down first.**
Dropping them on their skin immediately blisters the surface and locks in the vibrant purple pigments; fry for two minutes, then flip and fry the flesh for exactly one more minute.
- 8. Drain the eggplant on a wire rack and season immediately.**
Never use paper towels as they will trap steam and destroy the delicate crunch you just built; dust lightly with fine sea salt.

1. Build the dish from the bottom up on a dark plate.

Swirl a generous bed of the white sesame puree, arrange the hot eggplant batons on top to create height, and drag a heavy spoonful of the shaken black mayu over everything.

2. Garnish with spice and alliums before serving immediately.

Dust liberally with shichimi togarashi, top with the razor-thin scallions and toasted sesame seeds, and get it to the table alongside a cold beer or a bowl of heavy broth.

CHEF'S NOTES

● **Source real rendered lard for the mayu.**

Supermarket lard in a box is hydrogenated and carries a metallic off-flavor; hit up your butcher for pure pork fat to get the authentic, heavy mouthfeel that a proper ramen shop provides.

● **Respect the smoke point and maintain ventilation.**

Taking garlic to stage-three carbonization produces heavy smoke, so run your exhaust fan on high. When blending the fat back into the garlic powder, ensure the lard has dropped below 140°F (60°C) to prevent a violent hot-oil spray.



Chapter 5 — Drinks & Desserts

A guide to traditional ramen shop beverages designed to cut the fat, followed by a shortlist of light, seasonal Japanese sweets.

Last call under the shop lanterns. The chopsticks are down. The palate needs a sharp shock of cold. You want a cold mug of Calpico, a Japanese highball where the ice cracks, or a freezing cold Sapporo poured with a violently perfect

head of foam. These drinks exist for one simple reason: to scrub the rich pork fat from your tongue.

The sweets that follow are equally pragmatic. You want relief: a cold slip of kuzu pudding, the gentle chew of mochi, or a bruised plum soaked in cheap booze. They serve as quiet, unassuming codas to a heavy, savory meal. Pour a sweating bottle of Asahi hard to build the head, pass a paper-wrapped dorayaki, and let the night wind down.





The Momofuku-Style Yuzu Soju Slushie

유자 소주 슬러시

yoo-jah soh-joo sloo-shee

When you've just coated your palate with the glorious, emulsified pork fat of an eighteen-hour tonkotsu broth, you need a high-acid, freezing-cold counterpunch. A cold beer does the trick, but the Asian-American ramen shop pioneered something sharper. Built on a bracingly tannic black tea base, sweetened with thick Korean citron marmalade, and fortified with a lethal dose of soju, this violently blended concoction cuts through the fat like a scalpel, resetting your mouth for the next bite of chashu.

INGREDIENTS

1 cup	water	1/4 cup	bottled yuzu juice
3 tbsp	loose-leaf black tea	1 pinch	kosher salt
1/2 cup	granulated sugar	375 ml	plain soju <i>chilled or supercooled</i>
1/2 cup	yuja-cheong	4 cup	ice

PREPARATION

- **Bring the water to a rolling boil and steep the black tea for ten minutes.**
You want an over-extracted, highly tannic brew that would be unpleasantly bitter to drink on its own, but necessary to cut through the sugar, ice, and impending pork fat of the ramen.
- **Strain the hot tea and whisk in the sugar and yuja-cheong until fully dissolved.**
The residual heat of the over-steeped tea will help break down the thick citron marmalade.
- **Let the mixture cool to room temperature, then stir in the yuzu juice and salt.**
Never add delicate citrus juice to boiling liquids; the heat destroys its volatile floral compounds.
- **Transfer the yuzu-tea tare to a sealed container and refrigerate for at least twelve hours.**
- **Place the unopened bottle of soju in the coldest part of your freezer for three hours.**
This optional but highly recommended step relies on the supercooling phenomenon, dropping the liquid temperature below freezing without solidifying it.

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Pour the chilled yuzu-tea tare and the cold soju into a high-powered blender.

If you successfully supercooled your soju using the traditional Korean method and smacked the bottom of the bottle to create a slush, you are already halfway to the perfect texture.

2. Add the ice and blend on high speed for exactly thirty seconds.

You are looking for a violent vortex that homogenizes the ice crystals with the sugar and ethanol, creating a smooth, velvety texture rather than a watery snow cone.

3. Stop the blender and test the consistency with a spoon.

It should drape off the spoon in a thick ribbon. If it is too liquid, add another handful of ice and blend for ten more seconds.

4. Pour immediately into thick, chilled highball glasses and serve with wide bubble-tea straws.

Instruct your guests to take their first sip only after they have eaten a slice of pork belly—the shock of cold, ethanol, and acid will physically wash the rendered lipids from their tongue.

CHEF'S NOTES

● **Timing is everything with a slushie.**

Do not assemble this until the ramen bowls are plated, the chashu is torched, and your guests are seated.

● **Seek out yuja-cheong at your local pan-Asian grocer.**

Often labeled as Citron Tea or Honey Citron Tea, this thick marmalade provides a much deeper, more authentic flavor than artificial yuzu syrups, and its high sugar content acts as the chemical binding agent that guarantees a perfectly smooth ice texture.



The Kyuri Kup with Shiso Furikake Rim

Restaurant-style ramen is an endurance sport. The eighteen-hour rolling boil, the heavy emulsion of pork fat, the alkaline snap of the noodle—these elements coat your palate in an impenetrable layer of umami. To survive the bowl, you need a reset button. In an authentic American ramen shop, that reset is a highly acidic, freezing cold beverage. This sake-based cucumber-yuzu lemonade serves exactly that purpose, but the real genius lies on the rim: a violently tart, savory crust of homemade red shiso furikake. Don't insult the hours you spent on your tonkotsu by skipping the rim.

INGREDIENTS

200 g	fresh red shiso leaves <i>destemmed, washed, and dried completely</i>	1 1/2 oz	simple syrup
20 g	kosher salt	1 oz	fresh lemon juice
60 ml	umezu	1 oz	fresh lime juice
2 tsp	kosher salt	1/2 oz	yuzu juice
1/2 med	Japanese cucumber <i>roughly chopped</i>	4 oz	sake
		2 small	fresh cucumber slices

PREPARATION

- **Massage half of the 20 grams of kosher salt aggressively into the dried shiso leaves to extract the dark, bitter liquid, then squeeze dry.**
This dark liquid is the 'aku' or astringency; discard it completely.
- **Repeat the vigorous massage with the remaining 10 grams of salt, squeeze the leaves bone-dry, and discard the second round of liquid.**
- **Pour the umezu over the squeezed leaves and massage gently until they react and turn a brilliant crimson, then cover and let sit for one hour.**
- **Spread the leaves in a single layer on a parchment-lined tray and dry in a sunny window for two to three days until completely brittle.**
If you live in a humid climate, dry them in an oven set to its lowest possible temperature (around 170°F) for 1 to 2 hours, checking constantly.
- **Grind the bone-dry leaves coarsely in a food processor or mortar, then stir in the remaining two teaspoons of kosher salt.**
Do not process it to a fine dust; leave some texture for aromatic integrity. Store in an airtight jar.

INSTRUCTIONS

- 1. Run a lime wedge around the lip of two chilled rocks glasses and press them firmly into a plate of your homemade shiso furikake.**

1. **Muddle the chopped cucumber and simple syrup aggressively in a cocktail shaker to extract the botanical juices.**
2. **Add the lemon juice, lime juice, yuzu juice, and sake to the shaker, fill completely with ice, and shake violently for 15 seconds.**
The violent agitation is just as important as the rolling boil of your tonkotsu—it chills the liquid to the bone and slightly dilutes the aggressive acids.
3. **Double-strain the cocktail through a Hawthorne strainer and a fine-mesh sieve into the rimmed glasses filled with large ice cubes.**
4. **Garnish with a fresh cucumber slice and serve immediately alongside your ramen.**

CHEF'S NOTES

- **Sourcing fresh red shiso requires vigilance; it makes a brief appearance at Japanese markets around June and July.**
- **If fresh shiso is absolutely impossible to find, mix store-bought commercial Yukari with coarse kosher salt for the rim.**

It will lack the profound tartness of the homemade version, but it serves the structural purpose in an emergency.



The Baezilla Thai Basil Sake Spritz

日本酒スプリッツァー

nihonshu supurittsā

Restaurant-style ramen has a strict grammar: heavy bones, violent boils, and twelve-hour marinated eggs. When you put that much respect into the bowl, you cannot serve an afterthought beverage. Born in the late-night energy of Texas ramen shops, this sake spritz is the grammatical counterweight to a heavy, lipid-dense tonkotsu. Sharp citric acid and aggressive carbonation act as a scalpel cutting through the fat, while hydrated basil seeds offer a bizarre, delightful chew. Like your broth, this drink is a project—its soul lives in a twelve-hour lime oleo-saccharum that extracts every volatile oil from the peels.

INGREDIENTS

4 large	organic limes <i>peeled avoiding the bitter white pith</i>	3/4 oz	lime juice <i>freshly squeezed and strained of pulp</i>
1 cup	granulated sugar	3/4 oz	lime oleo-saccharum
1/2 cup	hot water	6 small	fresh Thai basil leaves <i>plus 1 sprig for garnish</i>
1 tbsp	edible basil seeds	1 tbsp	hydrated basil seeds
1/2 cup	warm water	3 oz	highly carbonated club soda <i>chilled</i>
2 oz	Junmai Genshu sake	2 cup	ice

PREPARATION

- **Construct the lime oleo-saccharum.**

Place the lime peels and granulated sugar in a heavy-bottomed, non-reactive bowl. Using a wooden muddler, aggressively crush the sugar into the peels for three to five minutes to mechanically break the cell walls. Cover tightly and let sit at room temperature for at least 12 hours so the sugar pulls out the essential oils into a wet, highly aromatic slurry. Stir in the hot water to dissolve the remaining sugar, strain out the peels, and refrigerate.

- **Hydrate the basil seeds.**

Combine the edible basil seeds and warm water in a small bowl, stir once, and let sit for 20 minutes. They will swell dramatically, developing a translucent, gelatinous halo around a black center.

INSTRUCTIONS

- 1. Muddle the basil and syrup.**

In a cocktail shaker, combine the fresh Thai basil leaves and three-quarters of an ounce of the prepared lime oleo-saccharum. Gently press the leaves with a muddler four or five times to express the spicy, licorice-like oils without releasing bitter chlorophyll.

1. Agitate the sake and citrus.

Add the Junmai Genshu sake and fresh lime juice, fill the shaker completely to the brim with ice, and shake violently for 12 to 15 seconds to chill rapidly and force optimal dilution.

2. Build the textural base.

Spoon one tablespoon of the hydrated basil seeds into the bottom of a tall Collins or highball glass, then fill the glass with fresh ice.

3. Double-strain the cocktail.

Using both a Hawthorne strainer and a fine mesh conical strainer, pour the agitated mixture over the ice to catch bruised basil leaves and microscopic ice shards.

4. Add effervescence and integrate.

Top the drink with the highly carbonated club soda, insert a bar spoon, and gently lift from the bottom once to pull the basil seeds up into the suspension of the drink.

5. Slap the garnish.

Take the reserved Thai basil sprig and slap it sharply against the back of your hand to rupture the oil glands, nestling it directly next to the straw so the anise scent precedes every sip.

CHEF'S NOTES

● **Sake substitutions dictate the dilution.**

If a robust, undiluted Junmai Genshu is unavailable, a standard Junmai can be used, but reduce the club soda slightly to prevent a watered-down profile.

● **Do not substitute chia seeds for basil seeds.**

Chia seeds lack the rapid hydration properties and provide a gritty, inferior mouthfeel that ruins the intended boba-like texture of the drink. If basil seeds are unavailable, omit them entirely.



Hojicha Pudding with Salted Caramel

ほうじ茶 塩キャラメルプリン

hōjicha shio-kyarameru purin

There is a rhythm to a great ramen shop meal, ending with a palate coated in rich lipids and heavy umami. To serve a dense Western dessert after an eighteen-hour tonkotsu broth is a grammatical error. The meal demands a palate cleanser that respects the precise, project-oriented nature of what came before it. This Japanese purin is no weeknight hack; it demands a twelve-hour cure, precise thermodynamics to prevent microscopic bubbles, and high-quality

loose-leaf hojicha. Spiked with a deeply savory tamari caramel that acts as the dessert's tare, this pudding stands as the ultimate, mature conclusion to a weekend ramen project.

INGREDIENTS

1/2 cup	granulated sugar	1/2 cup	heavy cream
2 tbsp	water	3 tbsp	loose-leaf hojicha
1 tbsp	unsalted butter <i>cut into small cubes</i>	2 large	large eggs <i>room temperature</i>
2 tbsp	heavy cream <i>warmed</i>	1 large	large egg yolk <i>room temperature</i>
1/2 tsp	coarse sea salt	1/4 cup	granulated sugar
1 tsp	tamari	1 tsp	vanilla extract
1 cup	whole milk		

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Construct the tamari caramel tare.

Combine the half cup of sugar and water in a heavy-bottomed saucepan over medium heat, swirling the pan gently without stirring until the syrup turns a deep, rusty amber and smells faintly of smoke.

2. Arrest the caramelization and set the base.

Whisk in the butter, warmed cream, sea salt, and tamari, then quickly pour a thin layer into the bottom of six ramekins to harden.

3. Extract the hojicha decoction.

Bring the whole milk and half cup of heavy cream to a bare simmer around 185°F, kill the heat, add the loose-leaf hojicha, cover, and steep for exactly four minutes.

1. Strain the infused dairy.

Pour the milk through a fine-mesh strainer into a bowl, using a ladle to violently press the tea leaves against the mesh to extract every drop of concentrated roasted flavor.

2. Break down the eggs without aeration.

Combine the whole eggs, egg yolk, and quarter cup of sugar in a bowl, keeping the whisk pressed against the bottom in a rapid zig-zag motion to cut the chalaza without introducing air bubbles.

3. Temper the eggs and double-strain the custard base.

Whisking side-to-side, pour the hot hojicha milk into the eggs in a steady stream, stir in the vanilla, and pass the mixture through a fine-mesh strainer twice for absolute clarity.

4. Construct the yusen-yaki water bath.

Divide the liquid into the ramekins, place them in a roasting pan lined with a folded kitchen towel, pour 140°F tap water halfway up the sides, and cover tightly with foil.

5. Bake and administer the twelve-hour cure.

Bake at 300°F for 30 to 35 minutes until the centers jiggle like loose gelatin, cool on a wire rack, then cover and refrigerate overnight to relax the proteins and liquefy the caramel.

CHEF'S NOTES

● **Respect the water bath temperature to prevent su.**

Boiling water in the roasting pan will cause the liquid inside the egg matrix to boil, leaving honeycomb-like holes that permanently destroy the pudding's silky texture.

● **Unmolding the purin requires a confident snap.**

Run a thin knife around the very top edge to break the vacuum seal, place a small plate upside down over the ramekin, and invert the dessert with a sharp downward snap.



Ube & Okinawan Sweet Potato Custard

A proper bowl of tonkotsu ramen coats the palate in a glorious, heavy slick of pork fat, demanding a hard reset at the end of the meal. This is the definitive conclusion: an obsessive, project-oriented marriage of two diaspora staples. We employ the dense, yolk-heavy grammar of Filipino leche flan—spiked with the profound, earthy vanilla notes of ube—and crown it with the honeyed, slow-roasted starch of Japanese beni-imo. Execute this with the same quiet, exacting patience you afforded your eighteen-hour broth, and your guests will finish their night in stunned, perfect silence.

INGREDIENTS

1 large	Okinawan sweet potato <i>scrubbed clean and pricked all over with a fork</i>	14 oz	sweetened condensed milk
3 tbsp	heavy whipping cream	12 oz	evaporated milk
2 tbsp	mascarpone cheese	1/2 cup	ube halaya
1 cup	granulated sugar	1 tsp	vanilla extract
1/4 cup	filtered water	1/2 tsp	ube extract
8	large egg yolk <i>kept cold</i>	1 pinch	kosher salt

INSTRUCTIONS

- 1. Roast the sweet potato low and slow to activate its natural enzymes.**
Wrap the pricked sweet potato in foil and roast at 300°F for 90 minutes to 2 hours. This prolonged, gentle heat maximizes the time the tuber spends in the amylase activation zone, converting its complex starches into sweet maltose.
- 2. Process the roasted sweet potato into a perfectly smooth puree.**
Once cool enough to handle, scoop the vivid purple flesh and push it through a fine-mesh tamis or sieve to remove all fibrous strings. Gently fold in the heavy cream and mascarpone by hand until it resembles a thick buttercream, then cover and refrigerate.
- 3. Forge a dark, bitter caramel to cut the immense fat of the custard.**
Combine the sugar and water in a scrupulously clean stainless saucepan over medium-high heat. Do not stir, as this induces crystallization; simply swirl the pan. Pull it from the heat exactly when it hits dark mahogany and begins to smoke, immediately pouring a thin, even layer into the bottom of six 6-ounce ceramic ramekins.

1. Build a dense, completely airless ube custard matrix.

In a large glass bowl, gently break the cold egg yolks with a spatula using slow, circular motions. Do not whip—air bubbles are the enemy of a glass-smooth texture. Stir in the condensed milk, then add the evaporated milk, ube halaya, vanilla extract, ube extract, and kosher salt, mixing until unified.

2. Strain the custard base to remove all structural impurities.

Pass the lavender liquid through a fine-mesh chinois lined with a layer of cheesecloth. This catches the chalazae from the eggs and any undissolved yam fibers from the halaya, ensuring the final product will melt on the tongue.

3. Bake the custards in a carefully insulated water bath.

Divide the base evenly among the caramel-lined ramekins and cover each tightly with foil to prevent a rubbery skin from forming. Place them in a roasting pan, fill the pan halfway up the sides of the ramekins with boiling water, and bake at 325°F for 45 to 55 minutes until the edges are set but the center retains a slight wobble.

4. Chill the custards thoroughly to set the structure and dissolve the hard caramel.

Remove the ramekins from the water bath, cool to room temperature, and refrigerate for a minimum of 12 hours. Do not rush this step, or the caramel will remain hardened to the bottom of the glass.

5. Unmold and crown with the sweet potato puree.

Run a thin paring knife tightly around the inside edge of each ramekin, invert onto a dessert plate, and give it a firm downward shake to break the vacuum. Top the unmolded flan and its cascading dark caramel with a clean quenelle of the chilled beni-imo puree.

CHEF'S NOTES

● **Whole eggs are strictly forbidden in this matrix.**

Egg whites coagulate at lower temperatures and create a spongy, diner-style texture. True luxury demands the structural density of pure yolks.

- **Know your tubers and respect their botanical differences.**

Ube and Okinawan sweet potatoes are entirely distinct. Rely on the ube halaya for the custard's earthy, aromatic base, and use the beni-imo—identified by its beige skin and magenta flesh—strictly for the roasted topping.



Yuzupioca with Pink Peppercorn & Basil

When you've just subjected your palate to an eighteen-hour, marrow-rich tonkotsu assault, you need a reset. Enter the yuzupioca. Born in the kitchens of the American ramen movement, it operates on strict structural discipline. The bracing yuzu cuts through residual pork fat, a pink peppercorn crumble brings a piney shatter, and properly hydrated tapioca yields a flawless chew. It is a meticulously engineered palate cleanser that pulls you back from the brink of a food coma.

INGREDIENTS

1/2 cup	small white pearl tapioca	6 cup	water
4 cup	cold water	1 cup	full-fat canned coconut milk

1/2 cup	whole milk	4 tbsp	unsalted butter <i>cubed and kept freezing cold</i>
1/2 cup	heavy cream	1 tbsp	pink peppercorns <i>gently crushed in a mortar and pestle</i>
1/3 cup	granulated sugar	1/4 tsp	kosher salt
1/4 tsp	kosher salt	1 cup	fresh strawberries <i>hulled and cut into small quarters</i>
3 tbsp	pure yuzu juice	1 tsp	granulated sugar
1/2 cup	all-purpose flour	1/4 tsp	yuzu juice
1/4 cup	almond flour	5 large	fresh basil leaves <i>sliced into a hair-thin chiffonade</i>
1/4 cup	granulated sugar		

PREPARATION

- **Hydrate the tapioca the night before.**

Submerge the dry tapioca pearls in 4 cups of cold water and refrigerate for at least 6 hours, preferably overnight, to ensure even cooking without a chalky core.

INSTRUCTIONS

- 1. Build the coconut-dairy base.**

In a medium saucepan, whisk the coconut milk, whole milk, heavy cream, 1/3 cup of sugar, and 1/4 teaspoon of salt over medium-low heat just until the sugar dissolves. Do not let it boil.

- 2. Chill the base entirely before acidification.**

Remove from the heat and transfer to a heat-proof bowl. Refrigerate until completely cooled to room temperature so the highly acidic yuzu won't curdle the dairy.

- 3. Boil and shock the hydrated tapioca.**

Bring 6 cups of water to a rolling boil, drop in the drained, soaked pearls, and boil for exactly 12 to 15 minutes until translucent. Immediately drain and plunge into an ice bath for 3 minutes to lock in the chew.

1. Marry the pudding base and the pearls.

Fold the cold, drained tapioca into the chilled coconut-dairy base, then stir in 3 tablespoons of yuzu juice. Taste and add a bit more if it needs more edge; cover and refrigerate for at least 2 hours to thicken.

2. Construct the pink peppercorn crumble.

Preheat the oven to 350°F and line a baking sheet with parchment paper. Whisk the all-purpose flour, almond flour, 1/4 cup sugar, 1/4 teaspoon salt, and crushed pink peppercorns together in a bowl.

3. Rub the cold butter into the dry mixture.

Using only your fingertips—the coldest part of your hand—quickly pinch and rub the cubed, freezing-cold butter into the dry ingredients until it resembles coarse, wet sand with pea-sized clumps.

4. Bake the crumble to a deep golden brown.

Scatter loosely onto the prepared baking sheet and bake for 15 to 18 minutes, rotating halfway, until fiercely aromatic. Let it cool completely to crisp up.

5. Macerate the strawberries.

About 15 minutes before serving, toss the quartered strawberries with 1 teaspoon of sugar and 1/4 teaspoon of yuzu juice to draw out a glossy, natural syrup.

6. Assemble and serve immediately.

Ladle the cold yuzupioca into chilled bowls and spoon the strawberries and syrup into the center. Scatter a heavy handful of crumble over the top, dropping a pinch of basil chiffonade on the fruit right before handing it over.

CHEF'S NOTES

● **Do not skip the soak.**

Tapioca is pure cassava starch, not pasta. If you boil it dry, the exterior will dissolve into slime while the center remains a chalky, unyielding pebble known as a shin.

- **Respect the yuzu timing.**

Dairy proteins are highly volatile in the presence of citric acid. If you add the yuzu juice before the cream base has completely cooled, it will instantly break and curdle into a grainy mess.



Strawberry Kakigori with Sweetened Condensed Milk

いちごミルクかき氷

ichigo miruku kakigōri

If the tonkotsu broth is the ultimate test of a cook's patience with fire and heat, kakigori is the exact same discipline applied to water and cold. Forget the crunchy, artificially dyed snow cones of American carnivals; a proper Japanese shaved ice dissolves on the tongue like dry cotton. That texture demands a forty-eight-hour directional freeze to purge impurities, a finely calibrated blade, and a vibrant, osmotic syrup coaxed from frozen fruit. It is a fleeting, icy conclusion to a heavy bowl of ramen, and it must be earned.

INGREDIENTS

1 gal	filtered or distilled water	1 tbsp	fresh lemon juice
1 lb	organic frozen strawberries	14 oz	sweetened condensed milk
1 cup	white granulated sugar		

PREPARATION

- **Fill a small, hard-sided cooler three-quarters full with filtered water and place it open in the freezer.**

Directional freezing forces the water to freeze from the top down, rejecting trapped air and minerals into the liquid below.

- **Remove the cooler after 24 to 36 hours before the block freezes solid.**

Invert it in the sink to drain the unfrozen, impurity-heavy water, leaving a massive, crystal-clear block of pure ice. Score and cleave it into shaver-friendly blocks, wrap tightly in plastic, and store.

INSTRUCTIONS

- 1. Macerate the frozen strawberries with the sugar and lemon juice for up to two hours.**

Do not add water. As the strawberries thaw, the sugar will pull the moisture out of the ruptured cell walls via osmosis, creating a vibrant, natural ruby liquid.

- 2. Bring the fruit mixture to a bare simmer over medium-low heat just until the sugar dissolves.**

Do not let it boil. Boiling activates the natural pectins in the strawberries, turning your delicate fresh syrup into a heavy, lifeless jam.

- 3. Blend the cooled syrup until smooth and chill until ice-cold.**

Pass it through a fine-mesh strainer if you prefer a perfectly glossy restaurant-style syrup, or leave it as is for a rustic texture.

- 1. Rest the clear ice block at room temperature until the frost melts and the surface is completely wet.**

If you shave ice straight from the freezer, it will shatter into crunchy snow. You must wait fifteen to thirty minutes until the ice becomes completely transparent and tempered.

- 2. Shave a base layer of ice into a chilled bowl, then alternate drizzling syrup and milk with more ice.**

Listen to the blade: a whisper-quiet sound means you are peeling true kakigori ribbons. Lavishly spoon the remaining strawberry syrup over the peak and finish with a heavy drizzle of condensed milk. Serve immediately.

CHEF'S NOTES

- **Invest in a proper block-ice shaver.**

Margarita machines and food processors only make crushed ice; to achieve the falling-snow texture, you need a hand-crank or electric shaver designed specifically to plane solid blocks of ice.