

# Vegetarian Stock

## *Ingredients:*

- 1 whole leek
- 1 whole yellow or white onion, with the peel on
- 1 whole garlic bulb
- 5 dehydrated shiitake mushrooms
- 6 inch piece of ginger, with skin on
- 2 tbsp fish sauce\*
- 4 tbsp soy sauce
- 2 tsp salt, plus more to taste
- 1 tbsp rock sugar or regular sugar
- 10 black peppercorns
- 2 star anise
- 2, 3 inch pieces of cinnamon
- 2 black cardamom pods
- 3 liters of water

## *Directions:*

Prepare your aromatics; cut your leek lengthwise and run it under the tap to clean out any dirt. Cut ginger lengthwise, onion in half and garlic bulb in half leaving all the skin/ peel on. Now you can char these aromatics; there are two ways to do it. You can place your veggies on a baking pan and place them under the broiler on high and rotate every 5 minutes or so to char the veggies. If you have a gas flame, you can char your aromatics right on the open flame. I place a cooling rack onto the gas flame so it's easier to lay out my veggies. Rotate your veggies every few minutes so every part gets burnt. This will help to bring out all the flavor- it makes a huge difference in your broth. Once charred, set aside.

In your stock pot (I used a 3 liter pot), place in all your spices and toast them on medium low heat for 2 - 3 minutes until you start to smell the aromas. Make sure not to burn it. Add in your previous aromatics and shiitake mushrooms. Fill your pot up with 3 liters of water or enough to cover the vegetables; if you end up using more than 3 liters of water, your broth will be more diluted so you may have to cook it longer. Bring your broth up to a boil and then place it on low with the lid on but leave half an inch exposed so your soup doesn't boil over. Cook your broth anywhere from 2 - 6 hours depending on how much patience and time you have. The longer you cook it, the more intense your broth will be. When you are ready to be done, it's time to season it.

Add in your salt, sugar, fish sauce and half the soy sauce. Taste it and add in the remaining soy sauce, extra salt, sugar or fish sauce as needed. Season the broth to your liking then let it cool completely. Strain your broth to remove all the veggies and spices; you can also cut up these veggies and put it back into your broth to eat. I like to portion out my stocks so I can freeze some and keep some in the fridge.

This is perfect on its own (I literally drink it by the mugfull) or as a base to any soup. It has similar flavors to pho with the spices and you won't be missing the meat at all!

**Notes:**

If you want to keep this entirely vegetarian, you can substitute the fish sauce for soy sauce, use a vegetarian fish sauce or omit it entirely. It adds a lot of the umami flavor but can still achieve the same flavor without it.