

# The Enlightened Kitchen: Fresh Vegetable Dishes from the Temples of Japan


*Mari Fujii*

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the **enlightened kitchen**

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**Mari Fujii : The Enlightened Kitchen: Fresh Vegetable Dishes from the Temples of Japan** before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Enlightened Kitchen: Fresh Vegetable Dishes from the Temples of Japan:

4 of 4 people found the following review helpful. DeliciousBy Megan N. BrennerThe recipes are pretty simple to follow and most of them share ingredients making it easier to stock your kitchen. My only issue is with some recipes they lack some specifics - example: sweet potato soy bean salad. There's no specifics on whether you would eat hot/cold beans in this, or how to cook them. It simply asks you to add them. If you look in the glossary it explains how to cook your beans, but the recipe itself lacks it. Not really an issue for most I'm sure, but it's ease is lowered when you have to play scavenger hunt for certain recipes.The recipes are delicious, and can be whipped up with moderate time

allowance. I make a soup, and two sides every breakfast and dinner using some recipes from this, and other shojin books I own. I find it only takes about 30 minutes if you multitask and about an hour if they require multiple sauces to accompany them. Overall it's a great book, some prior ingredient knowledge will definitely help for those who can't find everything there's helpful substitutions. 12 of 13 people found the following review helpful. vegan-friendly Japanese cuisine. By anonymous When I first leafed through this book after purchase, I was underwhelmed - some of the recipes are very similar to one another, and although filled with beautiful pictures, this too reduces the number of recipes in *Enlightened Kitchen*. Also, the ingredients are so few, and the preparation methods so simple, that I was doubtful as to how flavorful the dishes could ever really be. After sampling the recipes from this book, however, I was happy to be proved wrong on both counts! I've tried around 8 dishes so far, the standouts for me being the fried tofu with almonds (honestly the best fried tofu I've had anywhere), the walnut dressing (makes any steamed/raw veggies addictive), and the seaweed potato patties (very cute and even better when some onion is added). These recipes are deceptively short and simple - the mix of flavors are perfectly balanced in everything I've tried... I wish I lived near a restaurant that offered this kind of food! The index is useful as well, and due to the presence of several Asian markets in my area I haven't had any trouble obtaining the right ingredients. My only qualm (hence the 4 stars) is that I wish there were more tasty recipes in this book - the many pictures are beautiful of course, but not the reason I buy cookbooks. 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Five Stars By Lyndasue Johnson Clean healthy recipes to calm the spirit

Nourish body and soul with simple, delicious food from Japan's temples. *The Enlightened Kitchen* introduces readers to shojin ryori, the traditional vegetarian cooking of Japan's Buddhist temples. Shojin food, with its emphasis on fresh, seasonal vegetables, staples such as seaweed, grains and tofu, and natural flavorings rather than chemical additives, is a highly nutritious and delicious alternative to the many unhealthy eating habits of Western society. In addition to its health benefits, the preparation and eating of shojin food in Buddhist temples has great spiritual significance. After spending their days in rigorous self-discipline, the monks welcome mealtimes as a soothing respite, both for those preparing the food with loving care and for those eating it with relaxed enjoyment. Stunning color photographs accompany more than sixty recipes for soups, salads, tofu and bean dishes, vegetables, rice and desserts. The author, Mari Fujii, married to a Buddhist monk and an expert in shojin food for more than twenty years, presents an array of recipes including: Carrot and Mushroom Soymilk Soup, Steamed Pumpkin and Tofu, Beans and Eggplant with Sesame Dressing, Ginger Rice and Banana Tempura. Her step-by-step instructions are easy to follow, and she has made an effort to use ingredients that are readily available in most good supermarkets. Fujii includes a guide to basic cooking techniques used in the preparation of shojin food, an extensive glossary of ingredients and equipment, and fascinating background information on the history and philosophy of shojin ryori. Perfect for vegans, vegetarians and anyone interested in healthful eating, the dishes from *The Enlightened Kitchen* will warm our hearts, sustain our souls, and fortify us inside and out.

From Publishers Weekly Vegetarians, vegans and even lovers of steak teriyaki will find much to savor in this introduction to the quiet wonders of Buddhist temple cuisine, or shojin ryori. Fujii draws upon 20 years of experience as an author and teacher in her native Japan—as well as kitchen secrets learned from her husband, a Buddhist monk—to explore a tradition that depends solely on seasonal vegetables, prepared in a spiritual way. She introduces the temple repertoire, from simple salads to vegetable soups and stews. Tae Hamamura's color photographs are mouth-watering, whether depicting Kenchin Style Vegetable Soup or a simple bowl of Ginger Rice. However, although Fujii is eloquent when she explains each dish's philosophy, she falls short on introducing Westerners to the cooking principles that underlie the tradition. Preparation techniques for basics like rice and stock are relegated, along with a crucial glossary of ingredients, to the back of the book, where they are dealt with perfunctorily. If Fujii had taken more trouble to introduce Americans to the foundations of temple cuisine—methods, tastes, ingredients—she would have better empowered them to make it their own and feed the stomach as well as the soul. (Jan.) Copyright © Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved. "The book is beautifully illustrated and the recipes are mostly simple, quick and easy to follow. Longtime vegetarians, especially those with a macrobiotic background (which in America has seriously deep Japanese roots), will be familiar with many of these ingredients. . . . Fujii provides a helpful, illustrated glossary, as well as some basic how-to material for preparing staples." —Associated Press "Vegetarians, vegans and even lovers of steak teriyaki will find much to savor in this introduction to the quiet wonders of Buddhist temple cuisine, or shojin ryori. . . . Tae Hamamura's color photographs are mouth-watering, whether depicting Kenchin Style Vegetable Soup or a simple bowl of Ginger Rice." —Publishers Weekly "Clean and crisp, this nourishing guide brings a healthy, natural culinary tradition from Japanese temples to the American table. . . . a true antidote to the overindulgent American diet, this is more than a recipe collection--it's a refreshing approach to food that is sure to make you look and feel renewed." —Kirkus "Emphasizing natural and healthy ingredients such as fresh seasonal vegetables, and the staples of grains, and tofu, these creations are simple and elegant delights, delicious without undue extravagance. . . . Highly recommended." —Midwest Book "Touting the

benefits of vegetarian and vegan diets, The Enlightened Kitchen presents dishes that anyone would love, while the fantastic photographs will tempt even the most die-hard carnivore to at least try the recipes. Knowing that a healthy life-style and long life takes work, this new cookbook espouses good, sensible meals which can encourage weight loss and improve insulin sensitivity. The bonus? The food tastes good.... I'm hooked. I try to eat sensibly and plan to live to be 110! I expect The Enlightened Kitchen to help me meet my objective." —BookLoons.com

From the Publisher  
Brimming over with delicious recipes based on the centuries-old vegetarian cuisine of Japan's Buddhist temples, this book is a must for vegetarians, vegans, and anyone with an interest in healthy eating. In addition to mouthwatering recipes for soups, salads, tofu, beans, vegetables, rice, and desserts, the author teaches us the physical and spiritual benefits of using seasonal ingredients and following the flow of nature. In an age when processed, additive-laden foods are everywhere, readers will be surprised to find just how delicious the natural flavors of fresh vegetables can be. Lavish full-color photographs, easy-to-follow instructions, and a wealth of information about the ingredients make it easy to bring the magic of Japan's temple cuisine into your own kitchen.