

Japanese Parsley - Mitsuba

Cryptotaenia japonica



Height: 30cm (12in)

Suitable for: Rich moist soil in the sun.

Summary: Japanese parsley is an oriental salad herb. It is an aromatic hardy perennial with bright green lobed leaves. The flavour is reminiscent of celery mixed with a bit of parsley, sorrel and coriander!

More information:

In its native country Japanese parsley is added to simmered dishes (nabemono), and steamed dishes (chawan mushi), it is also used in green salads and stir fries. As the leaves are soft and aromatic they should always be added at the last moment for maximum flavour.

Some other ideas:

- The stalks can be tied in a loose knot, dipped in batter and deep fried as tempura.
- The lightly steamed leaves can be served as a cold vegetable sprinkled with a little soy sauce.
- The flavour of the leaves is light and summery, and they make a lovely cold summer soup.

Mitsuba and cucumber soup

1 medium onion, chopped
50g butter
½ large cucumber
1 heaped tsp flour
1½ litres vegetable stock

seasoning
2 egg yolks
2 tbs double cream
8 tbs [Japanese parsley \(Mitsuba\)](#)
... plus extra for garnish

Melt the butter and gently cook the onion for 5 minutes, then add the peeled and diced cucumber and continue to cook for another 5 minutes but do not allow the vegetables to brown. Stir in the flour, followed by 1 litre of the stock and simmer for 15 minutes.

Puree the soup in a blender and add the remaining stock, season to taste.

Beat together the egg yolks and cream with a little of the hot soup. Reheat the rest of the soup and add the egg mixture to the pan along with the finely chopped Japanese parsley.

Stir over a low heat for a few minutes to thicken but do not allow to boil. Serve garnished with chopped Japanese parsley leaves.

Japanese parsley is a new and unusual culinary herb, which is ready for culinary experimentation.