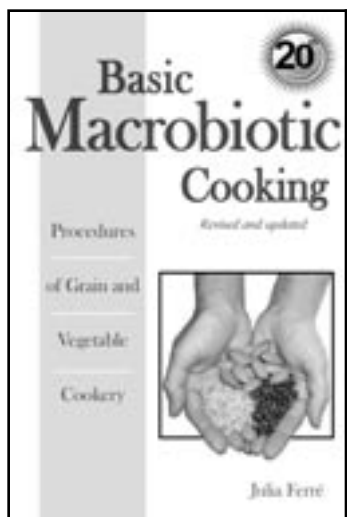


**“An Essential Tool
in mastering the simple
elegance of macrobiotic
cooking...and a vital tool in
learning to cook well for your
loved ones and yourself.”**

—Christina Pirello

BACK IN PRINT

by popular demand



**\$17.95 plus \$2.50 shipping
= \$20.45**

**“A Trustworthy Guide
for anyone ready to embrace
the wisdom and great tastes
in macrobiotic cooking.”**

—Meredith McCarty

**“An Excellent and
Useful Cookbook.”**

—Annemarie Colbin, Ph.D.

**George Ohsawa
Macrobiotic Foundation**



PO Box 3998
Chico, CA 95927
800-232-2372 or
530-566-9765
530-566-9768 fax

foundation@gomf.macrobiotic.net

Question and Answer

Which Miso to Use?

Carl Ferre

MACROBIOTICS TODAY,

I have been generally using hacho miso rather than milder types. What if anything are the differences between the various different types of miso as far as macrobiotics is concerned?

*Thank you,
Lenard Shaw
Chicago, IL*

DEAR LENARD,

Thank you for your inquiry. There are two main types of miso—long-term and short-term. Long-term misos are higher in amounts of salt and soybeans, contain less percentage of koji, and ferment in 1 to 3 years when traditionally made. Short-term misos are higher in percentage of koji, contain less soybeans and salt, and ferment in 2 to 8 weeks.

Miso is made of soybeans, a koji inoculant, and salt, and most times a grain (or other food)—most commonly barley or rice. There are many varieties available both from Japan and from domestic companies. Assuming the miso is traditionally made, the main macrobiotic consideration is the yin or yang quality of the miso in question. Chemically-processed misos are not recommended of course.

The types of long-term misos used most often in macrobiotic practice are barley (mugi), soybean (hacho), and brown rice (genmai). Barley (mugi) miso is made from soybeans, koji inoculant, salt, and barley. It is sweeter tasting than soybean miso and is recommended for daily use by Aveline Kushi in *Complete Guide to Macrobiotic Cooking*.

Soybean (hacho) miso is made from soybeans, koji inoculant and salt only. It is the strongest-tasting miso and is recommended by Aveline for making pickles and condiments such as tekka, and in soups. Brown rice (genmai) miso is made from soybeans, koji inoculant, salt, and brown rice. Aveline recommends it for occasional and summertime use.

The long-term misos listed from yang to yin are: soybean (hacho), barley (mugi), and brown rice (genmai). More salt and a longer fermentation time make miso more yang, while more koji makes miso more yin. Other long-term misos you might see are red miso (usually a barley or other-grain miso), mame (another soybean miso), and kome (another rice miso although not necessarily brown rice). Wheat and other grains may be used to make miso and I've tasted some good varieties using other beans such as chickpeas or peanuts.

The types of short-term misos you will find are mellow, sweet, sweet white, or shiro miso. These are good in summer soups, especially in hotter climates, in spreads, sauces, or dressings. Aveline recommends mellow miso to be used when serving fish since fish is more yang and mellow misos are more yin than any of the long-term misos.

For the highest quality miso, look for “traditionally made” or “naturally aged,” “100% organic ingredients,” and “sun-dried sea salt” on the label.

Further information on miso can be found in *The Miso Book* and *Japanese Foods That Heal* by John and Jan Belleme.