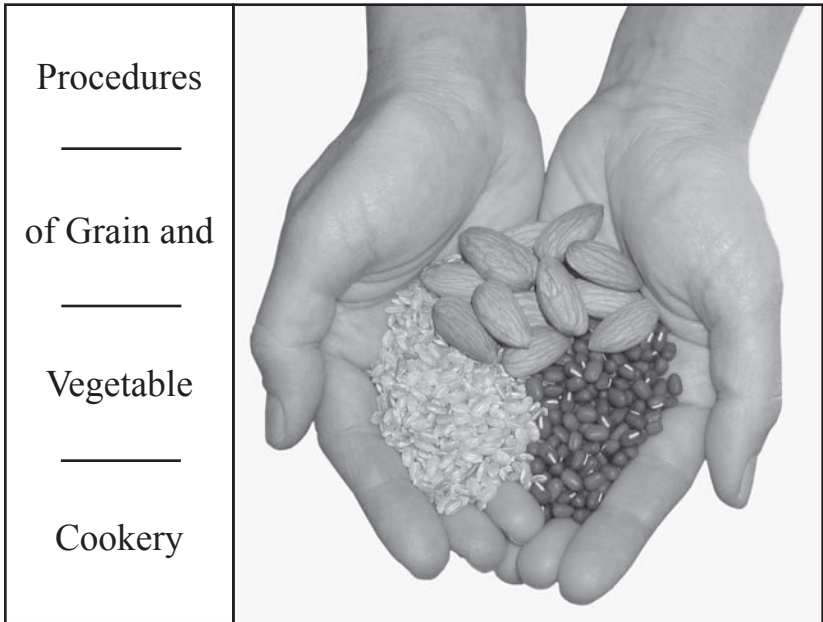


*Revised and updated*

# Basic Macrobiotic Cooking

Twentieth anniversary edition



Julia Ferré

George Ohsawa Macrobiotic Foundation  
Chico, California

Edited by Carl Ferré  
Illustrations by Jim North/Graphic Works  
Cover design by Christy Thomas  
Cover photographs by Debra Moon and Carl Ferré

First edition 1987  
Twentieth anniversary edition 2007

© Copyright 1987, 2007 by Julia Ferré, published by  
George Ohsawa Macrobiotic Foundation  
PO Box 3998, Chico, CA 95927-3998

ISBN 978-0-918860-59-0

---

# Preface

---

Many people are concerned about food. Everyone wants to be healthy and information abounds on ways to eat to have more energy. Advice ranges from “eat more veggies” to “avoid salt” and “reduce fat” to “increase fat, lower carbs.” Furthermore, many people are seeking ways that food can help to prevent diseases or support in the recovery from illness.

Macrobiotics is one way to address these concerns. It is suited for anyone wanting to take care of themselves and willing to take the time and effort to learn. While macrobiotics often begins with an approach to diet that emphasizes whole grains, beans, and fresh vegetables, it includes principles that encourage flexibility and adaptability and learning how to increase self-knowledge.

Macrobiotics has been around for years, maybe as long as modern-day vegetarianism. Like vegetarianism, many misconceptions have arisen. Both are associated with severe adherence to food choices and restrictions. Other assumptions include that one must devote long hours in the kitchen or learn complicated Asian ideas. While much of the origin of macrobiotic thought came from Japan, there is no requirement one must change one’s thinking or habits to Japanese customs. In fact, many people lead happy and enriched lives through the simple suggestions offered through macrobiotics without mastering Asian terms or utensils such as chopsticks.

This book seeks to open the door of macrobiotics to make it available for anyone eager to learn. Its emphasis is on cooking. Chapters are organized according to food groups. Within the chapters, information is presented by the procedures or methods of cooking. Practical information such as menu planning and how to use a pressure cooker is included, as well as theoretical information such as yin and yang and acid and alkaline.

This book grew out of my desire to see a beginning macrobiotic cookbook that anyone could use. When I began macrobiotics in 1980, I was single, worked 40 hours a week, and often lacked time or energy to cook. I would page through the available cookbooks for inspiration, but would end up preparing the same old rice and vegetables. When I studied with Cornelia Aihara, I learned different techniques and how to apply these techniques to a variety of foods.

Techniques are the procedures or methods of cooking that allow one to make a complete meal out of brown rice, pinto beans, and carrots. Techniques provide creative ideas by which one can enhance food, balance a meal, experiment. Techniques are the tools of the trade. Foods and choices of food matter, yes, but techniques make the difference. It is one thing to buy healthy food. It is another to know what to do with it. Cooking techniques provide the foundation for healthy eating.

The original *Basic Macrobiotic Cooking* was published in 1987. Four kids and almost twenty years later, I began the revision of the original text. I thought it would be simple. What I didn't foresee was that I would relearn the power of macrobiotics.

The power of macrobiotics lies in its application and whether or not it can be done easily. Dietary theories are fine, but if not practical, make no difference in anyone's life.

When I reviewed the book to see where it needed revision, I was pleasantly surprised. Typos, yes. Format changes, yes. Quantities of water or salt, additions of herbs and spices, yes. Techniques, no. The techniques needed no revisions. I am still using the cooking, cutting, and balancing techniques as written twenty years ago. These techniques have sustained and nourished me and my family with the passing years. They have provided variety for holidays, birthdays, and ever-changing tastes. What a revelation!

I am an everyday cook, preparing simple foods for my family each day. I hope you too enjoy the simple things in life.

This is an everyday cookbook. May this book offer you techniques and guidelines on your journey of taking care of yourself. And may you be blessed as you cook for yourself and your loved ones, everyday.

Julia Ferré

---

# Contents

---

Foreword	3
Preface	5
Introduction	13
<b>Theory</b>	<b>19</b>
<hr/>	
Yin and Yang Theory	19
Yin and Yang of Foods and Preparations	22
Yin and Yang of Cooking	24
<hr/>	
<b>Kitchen Hints</b>	<b>26</b>
<hr/>	
Timetable	26
Cooking Hints	27
Buying Food	30
Storing Food	31
<hr/>	
<b>Tools: Care and Use</b>	<b>33</b>
<hr/>	
Outfitting Your Kitchen	33
Pots and Pans	35
Cast Iron Ware	36
Miscellaneous Kitchen Utensils	37
Using a Pressure Cooker	38
Using a Suribachi	42
<hr/>	
<b>Cutting Vegetables</b>	<b>43</b>
<hr/>	
Using a Knife	45
Cutting Styles	47
<hr/>	

## Grains 56

---

Boiled Grain, Soaked 58  
 Boiled Grain, Unsoaked, Hot Water 59  
 Boiled Grain, Unsoaked, Cold Water 60  
 Boiled Grain, Roasted 62  
 Boiled Grain, Sautéed 64  
 Boiled Grain with Sautéed Vegetables 65  
 Boiled Grain, Layered with Vegetables 66  
 Pressure-Cooked Grain 68  
 Baked Grain 71  
 Rice Balls 72

---

## Noodles 73

---

Boiled Noodles, Shock Method 75  
 Noodles: Menu suggestions 76

---

## Vegetables 78

---

Baked Vegetables, Whole 80  
 Baked Vegetables, Cut 81  
 Baked Vegetables, Oil Coated 82  
 Layered Vegetables 83  
 Layered Vegetables with Cornmeal 85  
 Pressure-Cooked Vegetables 86  
 Sautéed and Stir-Fried Vegetables 88  
 Sautéed Vegetables with Miso 91  
 Sautéed Vegetables without Water 92  
 Sautéed Vegetables with Soy Sauce 94  
 Water-“Sautéed” Vegetables 96  
 Simmered Vegetables, Salted Water 97  
 Simmered Vegetables 98  
 Boiled Vegetables, Whole Vegetables 100  
 Boiled Vegetables, Cut Vegetables 102  
 Boiled Vegetables, Leafy Greens 103

---

## Soups 104

---

Instant Vegetable Soups 106  
 Stews 107  
 Boiled Vegetable Soups 108

Boiled Vegetable Soups, Creamy	110
Sautéed Vegetable Soups	111
Sautéed Vegetable Soups, Puréed	113
Sautéed Vegetable Soups with Grain	114
Sautéed Vegetable Soups with Noodles	115
Sautéed Vegetable Soups with Flour	117
Sautéed Vegetable Soups with Arrowroot	118
Miso Soups with Wakame, Boiled	119
Miso Soups with Wakame, Sautéed	120
Soups with Fish	122
Kombu Soups with Vegetables	123
Clear Broths with Kombu	124

---

## **Sea Vegetables** 125

---

Hijiki	126
Arame	128
Dulse	129
Kombu and Nori	130
Wakame Salads	132
Dulse Salads	133
Garnishes	134

---

## **Beans** 135

---

Pressure-Cooked Beans	137
Boiled Beans	138
Sautéed Bean Dishes	139
Sautéed Bean Dishes with Miso	141
Sautéed Bean Dishes with Spices	142
Baked Beans	144
Boiled Bean Dishes	145
Boiled Bean Dishes with Tahini	147
Scrambled Tofu	148
Tofu Burgers	149
Pan-Fried or Baked Tofu	150
Pan-Fried and Deep-Fried Tempeh	152
Sautéed Tempeh with Vegetables	153

---

## **Fish and Eggs** 154

---

Pan-Fried Fish	155
----------------	-----

Broiled Fish 156  
 Baked Fish 157  
 Baked Fish with Vegetables 158  
 Steamed Fish 159  
 Scrambled Eggs 160  
 Scrambled Eggs with Vegetables 161

---

## **Salads and Dressings**

162

---

Raw Salads, Tossed 163  
 Raw Salads, Layered 164  
 Raw Salads, Tossed with Dressing 165  
 Salad Dressing, Mixed 166  
 Salad Dressings with Sautéed Onion 168  
 Salad Dressings with Boiled Umeboshi Plums 169  
 Salad Dressings with Heated Oil 170  
 Grain and Bean Salads 171

---

## **Sauces and Condiments**

173

---

Clear Sauces with Kuzu and Arrowroot 174  
 Mixed Sauces with Ginger 176  
 Bechamel Sauces with Flour 177  
 Nut Butter Sauces 178  
 Chunky Nut Sauces 179  
 Miso Sauces 181  
 Tofu Sauces 182  
 Roasted Nuts and Seeds, Oven 183  
 Roasted Nuts and Seeds, Top of Stove 184  
 Roasted Sesame Seeds, Covered Skillet 185  
 Roasted Sesame Seed Condiments 186  
 Spreads 187

---

## **Pickles and Pressed Salads**

188

---

Salt Brine Pickles and Pressed Salads 191  
 Soy Sauce Brine Pickles and Pressed Salads 193  
 Pressed Pickles and Salads 195  
 Quick Pickles 197  
 Rice Bran Pickles (Nuka Pickles) 198

---



**Breads** **200**

- 
- Loaf Breads, Naturally Leavened 204
  - Loaf Breads, Yeasted 205
  - Batter Breads, Naturally Leavened 206
  - Muffins, Unleavened 207
  - Biscuits, Unleavened 208
  - Crisps 209
  - Pancakes and Waffles, Unleavened 210
  - Batter Breads and Muffins, Leavened 211
  - Dumplings 212
  - Baking Mix 213
- 

**Desserts and Snacks** **214**

- 
- Baked Whole Fruit 215
  - Fruit Cobblers 216
  - Fruit Crisps 218
  - Sautéed Fruit 219
  - Stewed Dried Fruits 220
  - Fruit Sauces 221
  - Fruit in Clear Sauce 222
  - Other Fruit Sauces 223
  - Fruit and Grain Puddings 224
  - Soy milk Puddings 225
  - Flour Puddings 226
  - Couscous Puddings 227
  - Kanten Gelled Desserts 228
  - Drop Cookies, Unleavened 230
  - Drop Cookies, Leavened 232
  - Pressed Pie Crust 233
  - Rolled Pie Crust 234
  - Pie Fillings 236
  - Cakes 238
  - Granola 240
  - Popcorn 241
  - Trail Mixes 242
- 

**Beverages** **243**

- 
- Bancha Twig Tea 244
  - Grain Coffee and Tea 245

Grain Milk 246  
 Umeboshi Kuzu Drink 247  
 Mulled Juices 248  
 Sparkling Juices 249

---

**Leftovers** **250**

---

Burgers 251  
 Fried Grain Slices 252  
 Grain and Vegetable Casseroles 253  
 Grain and Vegetable Pies 254  
 Grain and Vegetable Porridges 255  
 Ideas for Using Leftovers 256

---

**Menu Planning** **259**

---

Individual Meal Planning 261  
 Daily Planning 263  
 Weekly Planning 264  
 Seasonal Planning 265

---

**Menus** **267**

---

Menu Suggestions 267  
 Quick and Easy Foods 269  
 Beginning Menus 271  
 Quick Menus 272  
 Summer Menus 273  
 Winter Menus 274  
 Menus for Seven Consecutive Days 275

---

**Suggested Readings** **279**

---

Macrobiotic Books 279  
 Using Other Cookbooks 281  
 A Word on Supplies and Suppliers 282

---

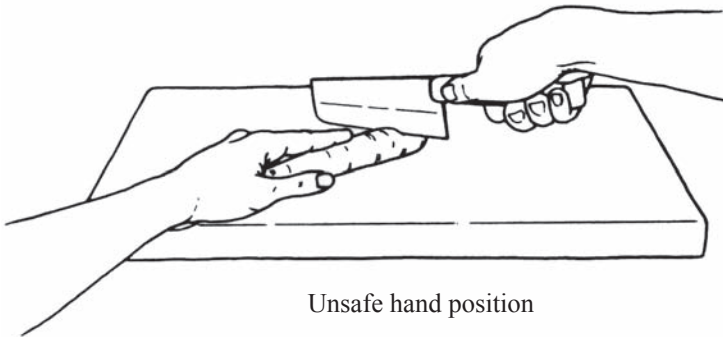
**Index** **283**

---

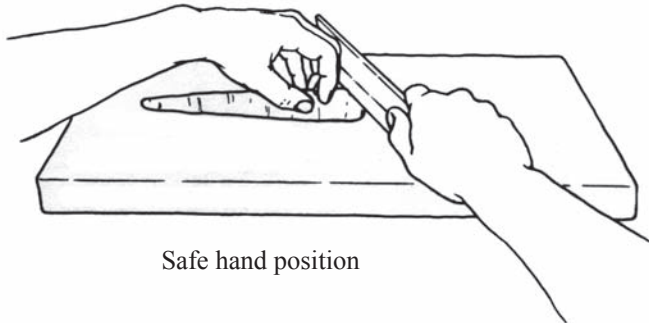
## Using a Knife

---

**Rocking Method** – Upon purchasing a rectangular vegetable knife, I began to cut vegetables following various cutting diagrams shown in cookbooks. I held the vegetables with fingers out. I held the knife loosely at the end of the handle and cut by rocking the knife, keeping the front of the knife on the board and using the back of the knife to cut. The cut used a down, back stroke. It took a long time to cut vegetables, and the pieces were uneven.

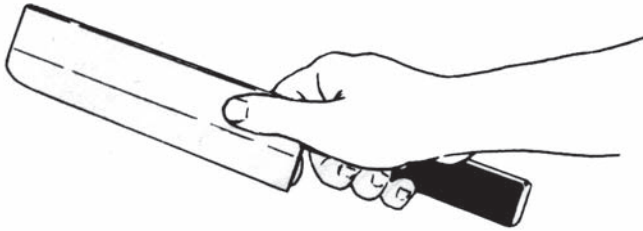


**Whole knife method** – In cooking classes, Cornellia Aihara used a different method of cutting. She cut fast and evenly. She held the vegetables with curled fingers, using the tips of the fingers and nails



to keep the vegetables from moving and to protect the fingers. In this way, the upper part of the knife blade comes in contact with the knuckles, and the cutting edge is far from the fingertips. After each cut, the knuckles move back ever so slightly, measuring the distance of the next cut.

Cornellia held the knife differently, too. She held it firmly and grasped the knife at the junction where metal meets handle. This way of holding the knife allows more control when cutting. To cut, the whole knife is picked up, and then sliced down on a forward stroke. The upper arm and body move forward with this cut, and the blade meets the board evenly.



Learning this whole-knife cutting was awkward for me and gave me cramps for a few days. After ten days, it was comfortable; and in one month, I was cutting faster and more consistently. If you desire, learn this method by practicing slowly.