Miso Soup

About
Miso is a fermented paste made from soybeans that has the consistency of peanut butter. It is very rich in protein and easy to digest. Miso originated in ancient China and is now also popular in Korea and Japan.

Miso soup is a favorite in Japan. It is made in endless variations, from thick and hearty to light and delicate. Almost anything can go in miso soup, including rice, noodles, gobo tempura (fried fish cakes), spinach, tofu, mushrooms, pumpkin, bean sprouts, Chinese cabbage, leeks, asparagus, turnips, white radish, snow beans, egg, and a wide variety of spices. Miso itself comes in many colors and flavors and is a complete protein because it is made from soybeans.

Miso soup can be served at breakfast, lunch, or dinner.

Ingredients
3 tbsp seaweed (like konbu), soaked in warm water for 30 minutes and chopped into match-stick sized pieces
6 cups of water
2 tbsp tamari soy sauce
1 tbsp grated fresh ginger
1 medium carrot, cut into matchstick-sized pieces
1 medium onion, thinly sliced
3–4 tablespoons red miso paste
Garnish (optional)
Scallions, chopped
Dark sesame oil

Directions
Combine the water, soy sauce, ginger, carrot, and onion in a large saucepan. Simmer for 30 minutes over medium heat.

Reduce the heat, and remove a half cup of the broth from the pan. Combine the miso paste with broth and return to the pan. Do not boil again, because the nutrients in the miso are destroyed with heat.

Serve topped with scallions or sesame oil.

Recipe for Miso soup (4–6 servings)

Reference
Recipe adapted from New Recipes from Moosewood Restaurant, by the Moosewood Collective, 1987. Published by 10 Speed Press, Berkeley, California.