JAPANESE

Shabu-Shabu

COMPLEXITY	SERVES	PREP	COOK	TECHNIQUE	CUT
Basic	**4**	**30 min**	**20 min**	**Poach**	**Inside round**

Ingredients

- 500 g (1 lb) inside round, frozen for 1 hour, then sliced paper-thin
- 1 piece kombu (dried kelp), about 10 cm (4 in) square (international aisle; or 1 tsp dashi granules, or plain water)
- 1.5 litres (6 cups) water
- ½ head napa cabbage, cut into large pieces
- 200 g (7 oz) tofu, cut into cubes
- 200 g (7 oz) mushrooms (shiitake or enoki)
- 1 carrot, sliced into thin ribbons with a peeler
- 4 spring onions, cut into 5 cm (2 in) lengths
- 200 g (7 oz) udon noodles, to finish

SAUCES

- 100 ml (⅓ cup + 1 tbsp) ponzu (or 3 tbsp soy sauce + 3 tbsp lemon or lime juice + 2 tbsp water)
- 80 g (⅓ cup) sesame sauce (goma-dare; or 3 tbsp tahini + 2 tbsp soy sauce + 1 tbsp sugar + 3 tbsp water)
- Grated daikon, sliced spring onion and chilli paste, for mixing in

Steps

1. Arrange the sliced beef on a platter, overlapping the slices, and cover until needed. Put the vegetables and tofu on a second platter.
2. Rinse the kombu quickly and place it in a wide pot or tabletop pot with the water. Let it soak for 20 minutes.
3. Set the pot over medium heat and bring it just to the edge of a simmer, about 8 minutes. Take out the kombu before it boils.
4. Add the cabbage stems, carrot, mushrooms and tofu. Keep the broth at a gentle simmer and cook for 5 minutes, until the cabbage is soft.
5. Pick up one beef slice with chopsticks and swish it through the hot broth for 5 to 10 seconds, until it turns just grey-pink. That is the poaching, and the swishing is the "shabu-shabu".
6. Dip the beef in ponzu or sesame sauce and eat right away. Keep adding vegetables and meat in small batches.
7. When the meat is gone, add the udon to the flavourful broth and cook for 3 minutes, until hot and tender. Season the broth with a pinch of salt and drink.

Notes

- **Slicing:** a partly frozen block is easy to cut thin with a sharp knife; many Asian markets sell it pre-sliced.
- **Other cuts:** eye of round or ribeye also work.
- **Equipment:** a portable gas burner or electric hotplate is ideal, but a pot on the stove works too.

- **Make ahead:** slice the beef and cut the vegetables up to a day ahead; cover and chill the platters until the pot is hot.
- **Chef's touch:** skim the grey foam from the broth between rounds; it keeps the broth clear and the flavour clean.