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Location: Double Saltree Meditation Center

Teacher: Hao Liu

Topics:

1: Dharma Talk: The Monk Everyone Avoided—and Why He Survived

2: Buddhist Diet Health: Braised Taro

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1: Dharma Talk:

Hello everyone! Welcome to Double Saltree Meditation Center, I am Hao Liu! Today, I would like to share the Dharma Talk topic: The Monk Everyone Avoided—and Why He Survived.

There was once a monk in the Buddha's community who fell seriously ill.

His body was covered in sores, his smell unbearable. Other monks, frightened and unsure what to do, gradually stayed away. The monk lay alone, his heart heavier than his sickness.

When the Buddha learned of this, he did not scold anyone. He simply went to the monk himself.

He cleaned the man's body, changed his clothes, and spoke to him gently. The sick monk began to cry. He had believed he was no longer worth caring for.

The Buddha said to him, "You have not been abandoned. Your life still deserves kindness."

From that day on, the monk slowly recovered. Not because the disease disappeared overnight, but because despair loosened its grip. His heart settled. His body followed.

Later, the Buddha told his disciples: "Whoever cares for the sick, cares for me."

This was not just moral teaching—it was a truth about life. When someone feels seen and valued, the will to live strengthens. When someone feels discarded, life often withdraws.

Life is shaped by the mind. Sometimes we survive not because we are strong, but because someone helps our heart stay alive.

2: Buddhist Diet Health: Braised Taro

In traditional dietary therapy, taro has long been regarded as a gentle and nourishing food. In traditional Chinese medicine, it is considered neutral in nature and sweet in flavor, primarily benefiting the spleen and stomach. Because it is neither overly warming nor cooling, taro is suitable for most body constitutions. Modern nutritional science also confirms that taro is rich in dietary fiber, vitamins, minerals, and plant-based nutrients, making it both nutritious and health-supportive.

First, taro helps strengthen the spleen and nourish the stomach. In traditional Chinese medicine, the spleen is regarded as the foundation of postnatal health, responsible for digestion and nutrient absorption. Taro has a soft texture and is relatively easy to digest, making it especially suitable for individuals with weak digestion, poor appetite, or sensitive stomachs. Moderate consumption may help improve digestive function and enhance nutrient absorption.

Second, taro contains abundant dietary fiber, which promotes intestinal movement and helps relieve constipation. Adequate fiber intake also supports a balanced gut microbiome, contributing to stronger overall immunity. Additionally, taro is high in potassium, which helps maintain electrolyte balance and plays a positive role in blood pressure regulation.

Moreover, the carbohydrates in taro are primarily complex starches that are digested and absorbed slowly. This helps stabilize blood sugar levels and provides sustained energy. For individuals who need to manage blood sugar or body weight, moderate consumption of taro can be beneficial. However, due to its relatively high starch content, portion control remains important.

From a wellness perspective, taro is best prepared using light cooking methods such as steaming, boiling, or stewing with minimal oil and salt to preserve its natural nutrients. Eating seasonally and maintaining a balanced diet are key to maximizing its health benefits. Especially during autumn and winter, moderate consumption of taro can help nourish the body and enhance vitality.

Overall, taro is more than just an ordinary ingredient—it is a naturally nourishing food that supports digestion and promotes overall health when consumed in moderation as part of a balanced diet.

3: Buddhist Diet Culinary: Braised Taro with Mushrooms



Ingredients:

500g taro

6–8 dried shiitake mushrooms (or 10 fresh shiitake mushrooms)

½ carrot (optional, for color)

3 slices ginger

2 tablespoons light soy sauce

½ tablespoon dark soy sauce (for color)

Salt to taste

A pinch of white pepper

A few drops sesame oil

Cooking oil as needed

Steps:**1. Prepare the ingredients**

Peel the taro and cut into bite-sized chunks (wear gloves to prevent skin irritation).

Soak dried mushrooms in warm water for 20 minutes. Squeeze out excess water and cut in half.

Slice the carrot, julienne the ginger into sections.

2. Sauté the aromatics

Heat a small amount of oil in a pan. Add the ginger and stir-fry until fragrant.

Add the mushrooms and stir-fry for 1–2 minutes until aromatic.

3. Braise the taro

Add the taro and stir to coat evenly.

Add light soy sauce and dark soy sauce. Stir to color the taro.

Pour in enough water to cover about two-thirds of the taro.

Simmer over medium-low heat for about 15 minutes, until the taro becomes soft and tender.

4. Reduce and season

Add the carrot slices and cook for another 3 minutes.

Let the sauce reduce until slightly thickened. Season with salt and white pepper.

Drizzle a few drops of sesame oil before serving.