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Location: Double Saltree Meditation Center

Teacher: Hao Liu

Topics:

1: Dharma Talk: Those Who Fear Death Most Often Live the Shortest

2: Buddhist Diet Health: Sichuan Peppercorn

3: Buddhist Diet Culinary: Sichuan Peppercorn Tossed King Oyster Mushrooms

Main content:

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: Those Who Fear Death Most Often Live the Shortest.

One day, the Buddha asked his disciples how often they reflected on death.

Some said once a year. Others said when illness appeared. The Buddha shook his head. True awareness, he said, is remembering impermanence in every breath.

This may sound frightening, but the Buddha noticed something important: those who constantly fear death live tense, exhausted lives. Their bodies suffer under the weight of constant anxiety.

Those who accept death, however, live more gently.

They sleep when tired. They do not waste energy on endless anger. They stop postponing life for a future that may never come.

The Buddha himself showed this at the end of his life. Though his body weakened, his mind remained clear and peaceful. He told his grieving disciples: "All conditioned things are impermanent."

When fear loosens, life breathes again.

Life is shaped by the mind. Letting go of the fear of death often gives life more space to continue.

2: Buddhist Diet Health: Sichuan Peppercorn

In Buddhist dietary culture, food is not only nourishment for the body but also a practice for the mind. Buddhist vegetarianism emphasizes simplicity, natural flavors, light cooking, minimal oil and salt, and avoidance of the “five pungent spices”, following principles of seasonal harmony and balance of yin and yang. Within this philosophy, Sichuan peppercorn—a mild and natural seasoning—can both enhance flavor and support health, making it a subtle but valued ingredient in Buddhist cuisine.

Nature and Traditional Health Perspective

According to traditional Chinese medicine, Sichuan peppercorn is warm in nature and pungent in flavor, with functions such as:

Warming the middle burner and dispelling cold

Promoting circulation

Relieving minor pain and aiding digestion

Buddhist diet emphasizes alignment with one’s constitution and the seasons. Because Sichuan peppercorn is warm but gentle, it can help nourish the body and stimulate digestive energy during colder months, without the excessive heat or stimulation associated with chili peppers.

Buddhist vegetarian dishes are usually mild, often featuring tofu, mushrooms, and root vegetables. A small amount of Sichuan peppercorn adds a subtle numbing fragrance, enriching flavor without heavy oil or salt.

Aids digestion

Its aromatic compounds lightly stimulate saliva and digestive enzymes, making plant-based foods easier to digest and absorb.

Warms the body and regulates qi

In cold seasons or for individuals with a “cold” constitution, Sichuan peppercorn can promote circulation and warm the stomach and limbs, complementing the gentle, balanced nature of Buddhist vegetarian cuisine.

3: Buddhist Diet Culinary: Sichuan Peppercorn Tossed King Oyster Mushrooms



Ingredients:

2–3 king oyster mushrooms

1 teaspoon dried Sichuan peppercorns

A small piece of fresh ginger (minced)

1 tablespoon light soy sauce

½ tablespoon rice vinegar

A few drops of sesame oil

Salt to taste

A small amount of cooking oil

Steps:**1. Prepare the Mushrooms**

Wash the king oyster mushrooms and slice them into thin strips or pieces. Bring a pot of water to a boil, blanch the mushrooms for 1–2 minutes, then drain and set aside.

2. Make the Sichuan Peppercorn Oil

Heat a small amount of cooking oil in a pan over low heat. Add the dried Sichuan peppercorns and gently heat until they darken slightly and release their fragrance. Turn off the heat and remove the peppercorns to avoid an overly numbing taste.

3. Season and Toss

Place the blanched mushrooms in a bowl. Add soy sauce, rice vinegar, salt, and minced ginger. Pour the hot Sichuan peppercorn oil over the mushrooms and toss gently to combine.

4. Let the Flavors Develop

Allow the dish to sit for about 10 minutes so the flavors can fully infuse before serving.