

Asparagus with Miso Lemon Dressing and Marcona Almonds

MISO IS A GREAT SOURCE of essential vitamin B12 and immune-strengthening zinc. Plus, it delivers big taste and significant health benefits. In the winter, it's easy to add miso to soups and stews. Come spring, I favor lighter preparations like this one that contrast miso's taste with the delicate and sweet Marcona almonds and fresh asparagus to highlight the flavors of the season.

- 2 bunches asparagus
- ¼ cup water
- 3 garlic cloves, minced
- 2 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil
- 2 tablespoons lemon juice
- 1 tablespoon sweet brown rice miso
- ¼ cup Marcona almonds (or whole blanched almonds)

To prepare asparagus, cut off and discard woody ends and chop remaining stalks into bite-size pieces.

In large skillet or Dutch oven over high heat, bring water to boil. Add asparagus and cook 2 minutes or until bright green and just soft. Remove from heat, drain water and set aside.

In small skillet over medium-low heat, sauté garlic in olive oil until soft (about 3 minutes). Remove from heat and stir in lemon juice and miso, mixing until miso is dissolved. Pour dressing over asparagus, transfer to serving dish, top with almonds and serve.

SERVES 4