



Danhobaksikhye

Pumpkin Sweet Rice Punch | 단호박식혜



<https://koreancuisine.net>

A beloved traditional Korean dessert beverage made by fermenting cooked white rice in malted barley water, beautifully enriched with steamed, mashed kabocha squash (*danho-bak*). The warm fermentation process naturally draws out sweet maltose from the rice, creating a remarkably soothing and digestive drink. Once the rice grains float to the top, it is simmered with sugar and chilled to icy perfection. The addition of squash gives this classic *sikhye* a vibrant golden hue, a velvety texture, and a fragrant, earthy sweetness.

 **Total: 7 hrs (incl. fermentation) | Prep: 30 mins | Cook: 30 mins**
(Ferment 5-6 hrs) |  **Moderate |**  **Sweet, Velvety & Refreshing |** 
Traditional Digestive Dessert

Ingredients (Yields approx. 2.5 liters)

- **Main Ingredients:** 200g malted barley powder (*yeotgireum*), 2.5 liters water, 2 cups warm cooked short-grain white rice (approx. 400g), 1/2 kabocha squash (approx. 300g, peeled and deseeded)
- **Sweetener & Garnish:** 1 cup sugar (adjust to taste), 1 tbsp pine nuts

Substitutes & Notes

- **Kabocha squash (*danho-bak*)** → Butternut squash or acorn squash.
- **Sugar** → Agave nectar, stevia, or monk fruit sweetener (for a lower-calorie option).

Allergy Information

- **Contains:** Wheat (Malted barley) (*Fully Vegan & Vegetarian-friendly*)

Equipment

- Large Mixing Bowl, Fine-mesh Strainer (or Cheesecloth), Electric Rice Cooker, Large Pot, Ladle

Cooking Instructions

1. **Extracting the Barley Water:** Place the malted barley powder in a large bowl and pour in half of the water (1.25 liters). Let it soak for 30 minutes. Vigorously rub and massage the powder with your hands to extract a milky liquid. Strain the liquid into another container using a fine-mesh strainer or cheesecloth. Repeat this process with the remaining water, combining all the extracted liquid.
2. **Settling the Sediment:** Let the extracted barley water sit undisturbed for 1–

2 hours. The heavy, starchy white sediment will settle to the bottom. (You must only use the clear liquid on top for the next step to ensure a clean, smooth, and refreshing drink).

3. **Fermenting the Rice:** Spread the warm cooked rice in the pot of an electric rice cooker. Carefully pour in *only* the clear barley liquid, discarding the white sediment at the bottom. Close the lid and set the rice cooker to the "Keep Warm" (보온) setting (approx. 50–60°C). Let it ferment for 5–6 hours. The fermentation is successful when 10 to 15 grains of rice float to the surface.
4. **Prepping the Squash:** While the rice is fermenting, cut the peeled and deseeded kabocha squash into small chunks. Steam or microwave until fork-tender. Mash it very finely with a fork or blend it into a smooth puree.
5. **Boiling:** Transfer the fermented liquid and rice from the rice cooker to a large pot on the stove. Add the mashed kabocha squash and the sugar. Bring to a rolling boil over high heat. Skim off any foam that rises to the top for a cleaner taste. Simmer for 10–15 minutes.
6. **Chilling & Serving:** Let the *sikhye* cool completely, then transfer it to an airtight pitcher and store it in the refrigerator. Serve icy cold, garnished with a few pine nuts floating on top.

Cooking & Pairing Tips / Health Benefits

- **The Science of *Sikhye* (Natural Digestive):** Malted barley contains a high amount of amylase, a natural enzyme that breaks down the starches in the rice into sweet, simple sugars during the warm fermentation process. This makes the drink an exceptional natural digestive aid, which is why it is traditionally served after heavy, festive meals.
- **Floating the Rice (Aesthetic Tip):** If you want the rice grains to float beautifully in the cup when serving, scoop out some of the fermented rice grains *before* boiling the liquid with sugar. Rinse them under cold water, store them in the fridge, and add a spoonful to each cup just before serving.
- **The Traditional Garnish:** Pine nuts are not just for decoration. Traditionally, floating pine nuts on top of cold beverages served a practical purpose: forcing the drinker to blow them aside and sip slowly, preventing stomachaches from drinking ice-cold liquids too fast.

Nutrition Facts (Estimated)

Total Content : Approx. 250ml (1 serving)
Calories : 125 kcal
– Sodium : 5mg
– Total Carbohydrate : 29.5g
– Sugar : 18.0g
– Total Fat : 0.2g
– Saturated Fat : 0.0g
– Cholesterol : 0.0mg

- Protein : 1.2g
- Calcium : 15.0mg

*Daily Values are based on a 2,000 calorie diet and standard Korean nutritional

**ference values Nutritional values are calculated based on the original ingredients, not substitutes

The Radiant Evolution of Fermented Elixirs: Golden Earthly Sweetness Meets Sprouted Malt

Danhobak-sikhye (Pumpkin Sweet Rice Punch) is a golden masterpiece representing the elegant evolution of Korea's traditional fermented dessert beverages (*Eumcheongnyu*), enriched with the dense bounty of the earth. Upon the time-honored foundation of traditional *sikhye*—where rice grains are gently digested by sprouted barley enzymes to yield a clear, refreshing sweetness—the vibrant, velvety puree of ripe sweet pumpkin is harmoniously folded in, transforming a translucent brew into an opulent, multi-dimensional dessert gastronomy.

Sustained across five to six hours in a steady warmth of 50 to 60°C, this patient saccharification process allows the starches of the rice and the natural sugars of the pumpkin to dissolve into the malt enzymes, breaking down textural boundaries. Without relying on heavy artificial sweeteners, the dense, natural richness of the golden pumpkin crafts a velvety viscosity that gracefully envelops the palate when chilled.

True gastronomy thrives not by abandoning heritage, but by thoughtfully integrating complementary natural elements to expand the boundaries of sensory pleasure. Savoring a chilled bowl of pumpkin sweet rice punch adorned with thin flakes of ice is a sophisticated culinary epilogue—effortlessly purifying the palate after a hearty meal and replenishing the spirit with the pure, revitalizing essence of the harvest.

Editor's Review

1. A Dynamic Contrast of Velvety Pumpkin Nectar and Airy Floating Rice Grains

The moment the chilled, sun-golden pumpkin sikhye touches the lips, a rich, velvety wave of natural squash sweetness coats the tongue in pure comfort. This luscious body is immediately contrasted by the airy, delicate chew of the fermented rice grains suspended on the surface, which release a subtle cereal nuttiness that balances the nectar. The resulting harmony delivers an endlessly refreshing, multi-layered sweetness that never overwhelms.

2. Amylase Saccharification Thermodynamics and Carotenoid Colloidal

Dispersion

Danhobak-sikhye represents an exacting application of enzymatic food science, maintaining a precise temperature range of 50–60°C where alpha- and beta-amylases in the barley malt systematically hydrolyze rice starches into sweet maltose. Concurrently, the abundant beta-carotene and soluble dietary fibers (approximately 5g per 100g) from the steamed pumpkin puree integrate with the aqueous malt extract to form a stable colloidal dispersion. A final boiling stage halts enzymatic activity, permanently securing a silky, smooth viscosity that resists separation even when chilled.

3. Digestive Harmony and the Gracious Solace of Post-Feast Hospitality

Served ice-cold at the conclusion of a lavish banquet or a rich holiday meal, a bowl of pumpkin sweet rice punch embodies the ancient Korean philosophy of thoughtful hospitality. Harnessing the natural digestive support of malt enzymes alongside the soothing sweetness of pumpkin, this pristine epilogue settles the stomach, washing away modern fatigue and granting an authentic sanctuary of warmth, comfort, and peaceful rejuvenation.

