



Gondeurenamulbap

Thistle Rice | 곤드레나물밥



<https://koreancuisine.net>

A quintessential nutritious rice dish featuring the delicate, earthy aroma and tender texture of gondeure (Korean thistle), perfectly harmonized with the rich, nutty flavor of perilla oil. It is an absolute delicacy when mixed with its special seasoned soy sauce right before eating.

 **Prep: 40 mins** | **Cook: 35 mins** |  **Moderate** |  **Vegan** |  **High Fiber**

Ingredients (2-3 servings)

- **Main Ingredients:** 2 cups white rice, 150–200g boiled gondeure (Korean thistle - if using dried, this is the yielded weight after soaking and boiling)
- **Thistle Marinade:** 1.5 tbsp perilla oil, 1 tbsp soup soy sauce (guk-ganjang)
- **Liquid:** 2.0–2.2 cups water (slightly less than the usual amount to account for the moisture in the thistle)
- **Seasoning Sauce:** 3 tbsp soy sauce, 1 tbsp chopped green onion, 1/2 tsp minced garlic, 1 tsp red pepper flakes (gochugaru), 1 tbsp sesame oil (or perilla oil), 1/2 tbsp toasted sesame seeds

Allergy Information

- **Contains:** Soy (Soy sauce, Soup soy sauce)

Equipment

- Rice Cooker (or Pot), Mixing Bowl

Cooking Instructions

1. **Thistle Prep:** Wash the boiled gondeure thoroughly, squeeze out the excess water, and cut it into bite-sized pieces (3–4 cm). *(If using dried gondeure, soak it in cold water overnight, then boil for 30–40 minutes and let it cool before using).*
2. **Marinating the Thistle:** Place the cut gondeure in a mixing bowl. Add 1.5 tbsp of perilla oil and 1 tbsp of soup soy sauce, then massage it gently with your hands. Let it rest for about 10 minutes so the flavors can fully absorb.
3. **Rice Prep:** Wash the rice thoroughly, rinse 2 to 3 times, and let it soak in water for about 30 minutes.
4. **Water Adjustment & Cooking:** Place the soaked rice in the rice cooker and spread the marinated gondeure evenly on top. Pour in the water—using

slightly less than you normally would for plain rice to balance the natural moisture of the thistle. Cook using the standard or white rice mode.

5. **Resting & Serving:** Once the cooking cycle is complete, let the rice rest (steam) for 10 minutes. Gently fold the rice and thistle together with a spatula so they are evenly mixed. Serve in bowls alongside the prepared seasoning sauce for mixing.

Cooking & Pairing Tips

- **The Importance of Marinating:** Pre-seasoning the gondeure with perilla oil and soup soy sauce before cooking is crucial. It scientifically ensures that the deep, nutty aroma infuses directly into the rice water while deeply flavoring the fibers of the thistle with savory umami.
- **Softening Dried Thistle (Pro-Tip):** When boiling dried gondeure, using rice-washing water (ssaltteumul) or adding 1/2 tsp of sugar helps break down its tough structural fibers, resulting in a significantly softer and moister texture.
- **Perfect Food & Beverage Pairing:** The earthy, clean flavors of this dish pair beautifully with a hearty bowl of *doenjang jjigae* (soybean paste stew). For a drink, a warm cup of roasted barley tea or a chilled bowl of traditional makgeolli perfectly complements its rustic charm.

Storage Instructions

- Store any leftover rice in an airtight container in the refrigerator for up to 2 days, or freeze it in individual portions for longer storage. Reheat thoroughly in a microwave. Keep the seasoning sauce stored in a separate container in the fridge.

Nutrition Facts (Estimated)

- Total Content : Approx. 800g (2-3 servings total)
- Calories : 1,200 kcal total (approx. 150 kcal per 100g / 400 kcal per 1 serving)
- Sodium : 850mg (42%)
- Total Carbohydrate : 75g (23%)
- Sugar : 2g (2%)
- Total Fat : 8g (12%)
- Trans Fat : 0g
- Saturated Fat : 1g (5%)
- Cholesterol : 0mg (0%)
- Protein : 8g (14%)
- Calcium : 60mg (6%)

Editor's Review

1. Fine Dining Perspective: Lipid Emulsification and Botanical Fiber

Infusion: This dish demonstrates a masterclass in plant-forward grain cookery, relying on pre-seasoning to transform humble wild greens into an aromatic carrier. Marinating the gondeure in perilla oil (*deul-gireum*) and fermented soup soy sauce (*guk-ganjang*) before cooking allows the lipid-soluble compounds of the thistle to bind with the oil. As the pot heats, the perilla oil acts as a thermal conduit, infusing roasted, nutty notes directly into the absorbing rice starches, while the deep microbial glutamates of the soy sauce season the grain matrix from within. Calibrating the water ratio to balance the thistle's retained moisture ensures that each rice grain remains plump, distinct, and pleasantly velvety.

2. Sensory Exploration: A Tapestry of Nutty Warmth and Earthy

Resonance: Lifting the lid releases an intoxicating cloud of steam woven with the fragrance of toasted perilla, damp forest floor, and warm grain. The first spoonful offers a remarkable textural harmony: the tender, silky ribbons of gondeure yield effortlessly alongside the chewy softness of rice. On the palate, a subtle, sweet earthiness unfolds, amplified by the nutty undertones of perilla. When folded with the seasoned soy sauce, a sharp, savory accent of garlic, scallion, and gentle chili warmth cuts through the rustic richness, creating a deeply satisfying, multi-layered finish that pairs seamlessly with *doenjang jjigae*.

3. Symbolic Praise: Mountain Heritage Born from Wild Flora: Deeply rooted in the highland foraging traditions of Gangwon Province, Gondeurenamulbap represents the ultimate expression of Korean wild vegetable (*san-namul*) culture. Born from necessity, it elevates gathered mountain thistles into a nourishing, high-fiber sanctuary of vegan comfort. It embodies the core ethos of temple and rustic home cooking: showing profound respect for native flora and demonstrating how simple, unpretentious harvests from the earth can be transformed into a soulful, restorative feast.

4. Poetic Imagery: An Emerald Forest Drifting over Silver Mist: Nestled within a warm ceramic bowl, the dish resembles a quiet alpine landscape. Threads of deep olive-green thistle drape gracefully over a bed of glistening, snow-white rice grains, catching the light with a delicate, golden sheen of perilla oil. Rising wisps of aromatic steam evoke the morning mist settling over quiet mountain ridges, turning a simple meal into a tranquil visual and olfactory retreat.

5. The Critic's Verdict: The Quintessence of Rustic Botanical Elegance:

True culinary genius often lies in the quiet restraint that allows natural ingredients to speak for themselves. Gondeurenamulbap is a triumphant masterclass in technique and harmony, proving that when wild botanical fibers, fragrant perilla oil, and pristine grains are unified with care, the humble bounty of the earth is elevated into an enduring, soul-warming masterpiece.

