



Kongnamulhaejanguk

Bean Sprout Hangover Soup | 콩나물해장국



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Kongnamul-haejang-guk is an elegant, scientifically proven biochemical detox soup. Its restorative power stems from high concentrations of asparagine—an amino acid densely packed in the fine roots of soybean sprouts—which directly accelerates the liver's ability to metabolize toxic alcohol byproducts. Cooked rapidly to preserve its crisp cellular structure, the sprouts are bathed in an anchovy-kelp broth and seasoned exclusively with Saeujeot (fermented salted shrimp). The enzymes (proteases) in the shrimp break down into free amino acids, creating a brilliant, clear umami synergy that revitalizes the palate and the body.

 **Total:** 20 mins | **Prep:** 10 mins | **Cook:** 10 mins |  **Difficulty:** Easy (Requires thermal and enzymatic control) |  **Profile:** Crisp, Clean, and Profoundly Savory |  **Focus:** Asparagine (Detox), Saeujeot (Umami), & Lipoxxygenase Control

Ingredients (2 servings)

- **Main Detoxifier:** 300g soybean sprouts (kongnamul) — *Crucial: Do not trim the fine roots, as they contain the highest concentration of hangover-curing asparagine.*
- **Umami Broth Medium:** 5–6 cups water, 10 dried soup anchovies (gutted), 1 piece dried kelp (dashima, 5x5cm)
- **Fermented Seasoning & Aromatics:** 1–1.5 tbsp salted fermented shrimp (saeujeot, mainly using the juice and small shrimp), 0.5 tbsp minced garlic, 1/2 scallion (sliced diagonally)
- *(Optional: 1 Cheongyang chili for heat, a pinch of gochugaru, 1 raw or poached egg)*

Allergy Information Contains: Soy, Seafood (Anchovy, Salted Shrimp)

Equipment Traditional Earthenware Pot (Ttukbaegi) or Medium Pot, Fine Mesh Strainer, Cutting Board, Knife

Cooking Instructions

1. **Asparagine Preservation (Prep):** Gently wash the soybean sprouts in cold water, removing only the loose bean husks floating to the top. Retain all the long, stringy roots to ensure maximum biochemical hangover relief.
2. **Clear Inosinate Broth:** In a pot, combine the water, gutted anchovies, and kelp. Bring to a boil over high heat. Remove the kelp after 5 minutes (to prevent slimy alginic acid extraction) and continue boiling the anchovies for another 10 minutes. Remove the anchovies to yield a clean, savory stock.
3. **Lipoxxygenase Control (Boiling):** Drop the washed sprouts into the

vigorously boiling broth. **To prevent lipoxygenase (an enzyme that causes a raw, fishy/grassy odor) from activating, leave the pot completely uncovered.** Boil for 3–4 minutes. The high heat denatures the enzyme while the open lid allows volatile off-odors to escape.

4. **Umami Synergy (Seasoning):** Once the sprouts are tender yet crisp, season the soup with the salted fermented shrimp (saeujeot) and minced garlic. Unlike soy sauce, which would muddy the soup's pristine color, saeujeot infuses the broth with clear, highly concentrated free amino acids (glutamate) for a deep, lingering savory flavor.
5. **Aromatic Finish:** Add the sliced scallion and Cheongyang chili. Boil for 1 final minute to release their volatile aromatic compounds. If using an earthenware pot, you may crack a raw egg directly into the boiling soup just before serving, or add a pinch of chili flakes.

Professional Culinary Tips

- **Biochemical Value of Saeujeot:** Seasoning this clear soup with fermented shrimp rather than salt is a masterstroke of culinary science. Through prolonged fermentation, the shrimp's natural proteases break down its proteins into free amino acids and peptides. When combined with the inosinate of the anchovy stock, it triggers an exponential umami reaction on the tongue without clouding the broth.
- **Asparagine's Detox Mechanism:** Asparagine (and aspartic acid) found abundantly in the sprout roots directly stimulates the liver to produce Alcohol Dehydrogenase (ADH) and Acetaldehyde Dehydrogenase (ALDH). These enzymes are essential for rapidly breaking down acetaldehyde—the toxic compound responsible for hangover headaches and nausea.
- **Thermodynamics of Crispness:** Soybean sprouts lose their cellular water and turn stringy if boiled at 100°C for more than 4–5 minutes, due to the breakdown of pectin in their cell walls. Timing the boil to exactly 3–4 minutes guarantees the perfect juxtaposition of a steaming hot broth and an energetically crunchy texture.

Nutrition Facts (Estimated)

Total Content : Approx. 400g (1 serving, including broth)

Calories : 55 kcal (Excluding egg)

– Sodium : 890mg (Varies based on Saeujeot used)

– Total Carbohydrate : 5.0g

– Sugar : 1.0g

– Total Fat : 1.0g

– Saturated Fat : 0.2g

– Cholesterol : 5.0mg (from anchovy broth and shrimp)

– Protein : 6.0g

– Dietary Fiber : 3.0g

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

**Nutritional values are calculated based on original ingredients; substitutions may alter specific macronutrients.

The Crystalline Symphony of Crisp Sprouted Gold and Fermented Shrimp Salinity: A Lyrical Masterpiece of Kongnamul Haejangguk and Restorative Clarity

Kongnamul Haejangguk (Bean Sprout Hangover Soup) stands as the pure, immaculate, and deeply restorative pinnacle of Korean soup gastronomy, where crisp, water-grown soybean sprouts (*kongnamul*)—bursting with natural vitality—are simmered in a delicate anchovy-kelp broth and seasoned precisely with fermented salted shrimp (*saeujeot*). Free from heavy animal fats or overpowering pastes, this celebrated elixir captures the refreshing, sweet essence of sprouted legumes and the clean, mineral-rich umami of aged coastal brine, filling the dining space with comforting, translucent steam from the very first bubble.

The moment a piping-hot spoonful of the clear broth touches the palate, an exhilarating wave of clean, ocean-cured salinity and sweet vegetable clarity cascades across the senses, effortlessly clearing away morning fog. The tender-yet-crunchy bean sprout stems deliver an invigorating snap that contrasts delightfully with the soft, broth-soaked grains of rice below. Complemented by the sharp, warming punch of minced garlic, scallions, and fresh green chili, mixing a spoonful of rice into the bubbling broth induces a gentle, restorative perspiration that banishes cold chills and soothes a weary stomach.

True gastronomy does not rely exclusively on extravagant luxuries; it flourishes in the transformative wisdom of turning everyday, humble sprouts and fermented seasonings into a reservoir of healing and cellular renewal. Savoring an aromatic bowl of steaming, crystal-clear bean sprout soup today is an elegant and sacred ritual—clearing away physical exhaustion through a wave of pristine warmth and filling the spirit with unpretentious nourishment, market heritage, and timeless solace.

Editor's Review

1. An Exhilarating Cadence of Crystalline Salted Shrimp Umami, Crisp Bean Sprout Snap, and Invigorating Pepper Heat

The moment a piping-hot spoonful of Kongnamul Haejangguk coats the palate,

an immediate wave of pure, savory depth derived from delicate *saeujeot* and clear anchovy broth awakens the taste buds with pristine elegance. This gossamer baseline is swiftly energized by the rhythmic, juicy crunch of fresh bean sprouts and the sharp, palate-cleansing heat of green chilies and scallions, orchestrating an endlessly refreshing, multi-layered sensory thrill that revitalizes the whole body.

2. Sprout Tail Asparagine Acetaldehyde Clearance Kinetics and Salted Shrimp Betaine-Protease Metabolic Synergy

Kongnamul Haejangguk represents an exacting study in botanical pharmacology and fermented seafood biochemistry. The sprout roots concentrate exceptionally high amounts of aspartic acid (asparagine), which directly stimulates hepatic alcohol and acetaldehyde dehydrogenases (ADH/ALDH) to accelerate metabolic clearance of toxins. Concurrently, natural vitamin C boosts immune defense against common colds, while the proteolytic enzymes (protease) and betaine abundant in fermented shrimp aid digestion and protect liver function, establishing an optimal biochemical equilibrium for rapid rejuvenation.

3. The Jeonju Morning Market Broth Hearth and the Grounding Sanctuary of Universal Rejuvenation

Found gracing the dawn-lit alleys of Jeonju's traditional markets and 24-hour soup counters nationwide as the undisputed noble remedy for weary souls, a modest bowl of clear bean sprout soup serves as an enduring emotional haven against daily exhaustion. Revered for generations as an essential comfort staple that thaws frozen mornings, chases away colds, and revives the spirit through pure, easily digestible nourishment, enjoying this honest delicacy washes away modern stress, granting a timeless sanctuary of stillness, market heritage, and grounded culinary happiness.

