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Understanding Umami

It’s one of today’s hottest culinary topics. Everyone’s looking for it. Everyone wants to add it. So what exactly is umami, and how can you put it to work on your menu? We tend to think of four basic tastes: sweet, sour, salty and bitter. Umami (oo-MAH-mee) is the fifth taste—often described as meaty, savory or brothy. It’s harder to pin down than the other four, but you know it when you taste it. It’s the tongue-coating richness of reduced meat stock, the intensity of Parmesan cheese, the concentrated flavor of sautéed mushrooms or tomato sauce and the complex, sweet-savory depth of naturally brewed Kikkoman Soy Sauce.

What’s behind all of these umami-rich ingredients is a high concentration of certain amino acids—often the result of reduction or fermentation. But it’s what they do to other foods that is truly remarkable. Umami ingredients boost flavor. Add them and foods taste richer, more intense, more fully rounded. And naturally brewed Kikkoman Soy Sauce is one of the most versatile, all-purpose umami ingredients of all.
SOY SAUCE AND UMAMI

Kikkoman Soy Sauce is made from just four natural ingredients: water, wheat, soybeans and salt. A special yeast culture starts the fermentation process that transforms them into soy sauce over a period of several months, much like the process of making wine.

This is essentially how soy sauce has been made since its invention about 2,500 years ago, when it was created as a way to give vegetarian food more meaty flavor. In fact, it’s one of the world’s oldest umami ingredients.

But what makes it different from other umami ingredients is its versatility. You’re not going to add a pinch of Parmesan cheese or chopped mushrooms to just anything you cook. But naturally brewed soy sauce, which contains more than 285 distinct flavor and aroma components, is an easily incorporated liquid that’s convenient to use and store. And when used in the right quantity, it can actually act as a natural flavor enhancer for just about anything savory. In other words, Kikkoman Soy Sauce can be “instant umami.”

ONE PLUS ONE EQUALS WOW

This is especially useful when you’re preparing a dish that contains other umami-rich ingredients. Add Kikkoman Soy Sauce to beef, pork, chicken, seafood, mushrooms or tomatoes, for example, and you get an umami synergy. As the flavors combine, they add up to more than the sum of their parts.

The key to creating this synergy with soy sauce is balance. In most cases—especially when working with non-Asian foods—you want the soy sauce flavor to remain in the background, so that you perceive its salty, sweet, meaty qualities without actually identifying a pronounced soy sauce taste. So go slowly at first, as you would with salt or pepper, seasoning to taste until you get the proportions right.

UMAMI MADE EASY

The recipes, ideas and tips in this book will give you a sense of the flavor-boosting power of umami—and the remarkable umami magic of Kikkoman Soy Sauce. They include signature menu items from some of America’s leading chefs, who represent a broad range of cuisines. Collectively, they prove a flavorful point: From Asian to Latin, from Mediterranean to mainstream American—and everywhere in between—Kikkoman Soy Sauce is umami. And what could be easier than that?
The first step in working with umami is to be sure you know what you’re looking for. Try these simple taste tests.

**CHICKEN BROTH**
1. Place 1/4 cup warm low-sodium chicken broth in each of two small bowls. To one bowl, add 1/4 tsp. Kikkoman Soy Sauce.
2. First, taste the plain broth, allowing the flavors to spread across your tongue and palate.
3. Now taste the Kikkoman-enhanced broth. Notice that you don’t really taste soy sauce, but that the broth has more depth and a richer, meatier flavor. That’s the synergy between the umami flavors of the soy sauce and the chicken.

**MAYONNAISE SPREAD**
1. Combine 1/4 cup mayonnaise and 1/2 tsp. Dijon mustard in each of two small bowls. To one bowl, add 1 1/2 tsp. Kikkoman Soy Sauce.
2. Taste the spread without Kikkoman Soy Sauce first.
3. Now taste the spread with Kikkoman Soy Sauce. Again, you don’t really taste soy sauce, but the spread is more appetizing and has a bigger, rounder flavor. You’re experiencing the synergy between the soy sauce and the eggs in the mayo.
Umami Easy Peanut Sauce

In container or blender, combine 3/4 cup Kikkoman Less Sodium Soy Sauce, 2 1/2 cups vegetable broth, 1/3 cup rice vinegar, 1/3 cup water, 5 tsp. Asian sesame oil, 2 1/2 tsp. minced garlic, 2 1/2 tsp. grated fresh ginger and 1 1/2 tsp. sugar. Add 2 cups chunky peanut butter; blend to emulsify. Mix in 1 1/2 tsp. red pepper flakes. Serve with grilled fish or chicken, or with roast pork. (Yield: 6 1/2 cups)

Soy-White Truffle Oil Vinaigrette

In bowl, whisk together 3/4 cup Kikkoman Soy Sauce, 6 Tbsp. lemon juice, 3 Tbsp. balsamic vinegar, 3 Tbsp. white truffle oil and 1 1/2 cups olive oil; season to taste with salt and pepper. Whisk or shake well before using. Drizzle over grilled vegetables, such as zucchini, eggplant and corn, or roasted root vegetables. (Yield: 3 cups)

Soy-Sherry Synergy Dressing

Combine 2 cups olive oil, 1 cup sherry vinegar, 1 cup Kikkoman Soy Sauce and 1/3 cup Dijon mustard; season with pepper. Use to dress salads with sturdy greens such as romaine lettuce, watercress or arugula. (Yield: 1 quart)

Fat-Free Asian Dressing

Whisk together 1/2 cup Kikkoman Mirin, 1/4 cup rice vinegar, 2 Tbsp. Kikkoman Soy Sauce and 2 Tbsp. minced shallots. Toss with shredded red or green cabbage and grated carrots for a healthy Asian slaw. (Yield: 1 cup)

Sesamiso Dressing

Whisk together 1/2 cup mayonnaise, 1/4 cup ground, toasted white sesame seeds, 1/4 cup Kikkoman Soy Sauce, 1/4 cup rice vinegar and 2 Tbsp. white miso. Great with romaine lettuce salad or steamed vegetables. (Yield: 1 cup)

Sonoma Soy

Heat 1 cup extra virgin olive oil with 2 Tbsp. fresh thyme leaves and zest of 1 Meyer lemon until thyme bubbles. Cool, strain and purée with 2 cups mixed fresh herbs such as basil, parsley and cilantro, 1/4 cup lemon juice and 2 Tbsp. Kikkoman Soy Sauce. Drizzle over avocado halves or cold poached shrimp. (Yield: 1 1/2 cups)

These days, dressings aren’t just for salads. They’re the finishing accent to all kinds of presentations, adding sparkle, color and flavor. And in the case of these simple recipes, they add umami, bringing out the best qualities of the foods they accompany.
GRAPEFRUIT SALAD WITH JICAMA

The interplay of sweet, salty, sour and spicy flavors is what makes Southeast Asian foods so appealing. Those flavors blend perfectly in this popular salad from The Slanted Door. Kikkoman Soy Sauce, in place of the more typically Vietnamese fish sauce, adds a richness and depth that marry well with the sweet, toasty pecans and balance the brightness of the grapefruit.

To make dressing, in mortar, pound 5 cloves garlic, 2 Thai chiles and 3/4 cup sugar to a paste. Add 1 cup Kikkoman Less Sodium Soy Sauce, 1 cup water and 1/2 cup rice vinegar. (Yield: 2 1/2 cups)

Combine 1 lb. thinly shredded red cabbage, washed and rinsed twice, 1/2 lb. jicama, cut into thin strips with mandoline, 1/4 lb. carrots, cut into thin strips with mandoline, 1 large grapefruit, sectioned, 1/2 cup candied pecans, 1/4 cup chopped rau ram (Vietnamese mint) or mint, 2 Tbsp. olive oil and 1/2 cup dressing. Toss ingredients well before serving. (Serves 6)
Umami Secret Sauce
Mix 4 cups mayonnaise, ¼ cup Kikkoman Soy Sauce and ¼ cup Dijon mustard. Use as sauce for fish, dip for vegetables or spread for burgers and sandwiches. (Yield: 4 ¾ cups)

Ponzumami Mustard
Whisk together ½ cup whole-grain mustard, 4 tsp. Kikkoman Soy Sauce, 2 tsp. Kikkoman Ponzu Sauce and 2 tsp. Asian sesame oil. Great on ham, beef or turkey sandwiches. (Yield: ½ cup)

Broccoli Japonaise
Whisk together 1 cup mayonnaise, 4 tsp. chili paste and 2 tsp. Asian sesame oil. Served with breaded, fried broccoli florets. (Yield: 1 cup)

Lemon Aioli
Mix 4 cups mayonnaise, ¼ cup Kikkoman Soy Sauce, 1 ½ oz. minced garlic, 2 Tbsp. grated lemon peel and 4 tsp. lemon juice. Serve with grilled or breaded fish or shrimp, fried calamari, steamed artichokes or asparagus. (Yield: 1 quart)

Spicy Asian Ketchup
Spike 1 cup tomato ketchup with 2 tsp. Kikkoman Soy Sauce, 2 tsp. chili paste and ½ tsp. fresh ginger; sweeten with 2 Tbsp. dark brown sugar or palm sugar. Serve with teriyaki burgers or french fries. (Yield: 1 cup)

Condiments are all about umami. Think ketchup or steak sauce. They’re meant to be used in small quantities to add big flavor. Prepare condiments with Kikkoman Soy Sauce, and you’re a step ahead in adding flavor-boosting intensity.

Soy-Sesame Mayo
Mix 1 cup mayonnaise, 2 Tbsp. Asian sesame oil and 1 Tbsp. Kikkoman Soy Sauce. Great on ham sandwiches or tuna burgers. (Yield: 1 cup)
OPEN-FACED RARE-SEARED TUNA SANDWICH WITH EDAMAME PURÉE

Nancy Silverton loves to layer flavors when she cooks, and this fork-and-knife sandwich is no exception. A Kikkoman Soy Sauce marinade gives the tuna added depth and blends perfectly with the creamy edamame.

Whisk together 3/4 cup Kikkoman Soy Sauce, 1/4 cup canola oil, 2 Tbsp. sugar, 1 Tbsp. orange juice, 2 tsp. grated ginger, 1 tsp. minced garlic and 1 tsp. chili flakes. Place 1 lb. ahi tuna, cut into a 2” x 6” block, in marinade; turn to coat. Refrigerate 4 hours, turning occasionally.

Combine 3 cups shelled edamame and 1 1/2 cups extra virgin olive oil in saucepan over medium-high heat; cook 5 minutes. Drain, reserving edamame and oil separately. In large bowl, stir together 3 Tbsp. each finely chopped parsley, mint and cilantro, 1 to 2 Tbsp. sambal chili paste, 1 tsp. lemon juice, 1 tsp. red wine vinegar, 1/2 tsp. minced garlic, 1/3 tsp. kosher salt and 1/4 cup plus 2 Tbsp. reserved olive oil. Add 1 cup reserved edamame; stir to combine. Blend remaining edamame in food processor to make a chunky purée. Stir in 1/2 cup reserved olive oil, 1 Tbsp. lemon juice, 1 tsp. kosher salt and 1/3 tsp. minced garlic.

Remove tuna from marinade; pat dry with paper towels. In cast-iron or heavy-duty skillet, heat canola oil over high heat. Sear tuna about 30 seconds on each side. Refrigerate until cold.

Spread 1 heaping spoonful edamame purée onto each of 4 thick slices grilled or toasted sourdough round. Cut tuna into 16 (1/4”-thick) slices. Layer tuna over edamame purée; spread whole edamame over tuna. Garnish with cilantro leaves.

(Serves 4)
Seafood

**Caesar-Crusted Tilapia**

Marinate 1 lb. tilapia or rock cod in 2 Tbsp. olive oil, 2 Tbsp. lemon juice, 1 Tbsp. Kikkoman Less Sodium Soy Sauce and 1 tsp. minced garlic. Grill; brush with Caesar Mayonnaise (combine ½ cup mayonnaise, 1 Tbsp. grated Parmesan cheese, 2 tsp. Kikkoman Less Sodium Soy Sauce and ½ tsp. grated lemon zest) and broil until golden. Serve over grilled romaine hearts; sprinkle with seasoned, browned Kikkoman Panko Japanese Style Bread Crumbs and Parmesan cheese.

**Stir-Fried Shrimp**

Marinate 1 lb. shell-on shrimp 20 minutes in 3 Tbsp. Kikkoman Soy Sauce, 2 Tbsp. Kikkoman Mirin, 1 tsp. ginger juice and ½ tsp. Asian sesame oil. Drain; stir-fry in 2 tsp. peanut oil with 1 cup red bell pepper squares and ½ cup 1” pieces green onion about 5 minutes or until shrimp turns pink.

**Steamed Scallops with Tamari and Ginger**

Cut 4 oz. sea scallops in half horizontally; arrange in one layer on plate. Sprinkle with ½ tsp. ginger threads; drizzle with 2 tsp. Kikkoman Tamari Soy Sauce and ½ tsp. Asian sesame oil. Scatter 1 Tbsp. green onions on top. Place plate on steamer over boiling water. Cover and steam 5 minutes or until scallops are opaque. Sprinkle with ½ tsp. sesame seeds; garnish with cilantro sprigs.

**Clear-Steamed” Fish Fillets**

Soak 1 Tbsp. Chinese salted black beans in hot water; drain and mash with side of knife. Mix with 1 Tbsp. Kikkoman Soy Sauce, 1 Tbsp. Asian sesame oil, 2 tsp. lemon juice, 2 tsp. rice vinegar, 1 tsp. grated ginger and 1 tsp. chili oil. Add ½ lb. ahi tuna, cut into ½” dice, and ½ cup peeled, seeded and diced cucumber. Spoon onto deep-fried wonton crisps; sprinkle with chopped green onions and toasted sesame seeds.

**Grilled Sea Bass with Garlic-Ginger Soy**

In small sauté pan, heat 2 Tbsp. peanut oil. Fry 1 oz. finely minced garlic a few seconds; add 1 oz. very finely juliened ginger. Fry a few seconds; add 1 oz. green onion tops, thinly sliced on the diagonal. Fry until garlic and ginger are golden brown. Drain on paper towels. In saucepan, heat 1 1/2 cups Kikkoman Soy Sauce and 3 oz. sugar until sugar dissolves. For each serving, grill 1 sea bass fillet on medium-hot grill 4 to 6 minutes on each side or until cooked throughout. Place 3 Tbsp. soy mixture and a pinch of garlic-ginger mixture in small ramekin; serve on side.
SCALLOP CEVICHE

Ceviche meets sashimi in this simple yet complex-tasting small-plate presentation. Unlike some ceviches, in which acid "cooks" the protein in the seafood, this one marinates for only a few minutes—just long enough for the Kikkoman Less Sodium Soy Sauce, acidic ingredients, sugar and chiles to season the scallops. The result is pure umami: The intense dressing doesn’t overpower the delicate flavor of the scallops, but actually coaxes it out and brings it to the foreground.

Remove 4 large live scallops from shells, reserving shells. Slice scallops thinly; place in non-reactive bowl.

Whisk together 2 Tbsp. yuzu juice, 2 Tbsp. Kikkoman Less Sodium Soy Sauce, 1 Tbsp. Asian sesame oil, 1 Tbsp. lemon juice, 1 tsp. sugar, 1 tsp. finely diced red jalapeño and 1 tsp. finely diced red onion. Pour over scallops; marinate at least 8, but not more than 12, minutes. Spoon ceviche into reserved shells; garnish with sliced chives. Serve immediately on bed of crushed ice. (Serves 4)
Asian Short Ribs with Star Anise
In sauté pan, brown 2 lbs. bone-in short ribs and 1 cup sliced onion; transfer to casserole. Deglaze pan with 1 cup rice wine; add 1 cup beef stock, 2 Tbsp. Kikkoman Soy Sauce, 2 Tbsp. brown sugar or palm sugar, 10 garlic cloves, 3 star anise pods and 1/2 tsp. ground ginger to casserole. Cover and braise in 300°F oven until meat is falling off bones. Remove ribs; strain and de-fat liquid. Simmer ribs in liquid until liquid is reduced and flavorful. Add 1 Tbsp. butter; simmer until incorporated. Garnish with snipped chives and a dab of wasabi paste.

Fajita Marinade
Combine 3 cups pineapple juice and 1 cup Kikkoman Soy Sauce. Use 1/2 cup marinade per 4 lbs. beef skirt steak. Grill beef, slice and serve with warm flour tortillas, pico de gallo and fajita garnishes.

(Yield: 1 quart)

Meatballs Simmered in Plum Sauce
Mix together 2 1/2 lbs. ground turkey, 2 1/2 lbs. mild Italian sausage, 5 oz. finely diced onion, 2 oz. minced garlic, 1/2 cup chopped cilantro, 1/2 cup Kikkoman Soy Sauce, 2 eggs and 2 Tbsp. salt. Form mixture into 1 oz. balls. Heat vegetable oil in heavy sauté pan; brown meatballs on all sides. Transfer meatballs to large rondo. Add 6 cups Kikkoman Plum Sauce to rondo; bring to a simmer over medium heat. Simmer, covered, 5 to 10 minutes or until meatballs are cooked through. (Yield: 96 meatballs)

Grilled Leg of Lamb in Soy-Balsamic Marinade
Whisk together 3/4 cup minced shallots, 3/4 cup olive oil, 3/4 cup balsamic vinegar, 3 Tbsp. Kikkoman Soy Sauce, 3 Tbsp. minced garlic, 3 Tbsp. Dijon mustard, 3 Tbsp. chopped cilantro, 1/4 tsp Kikkoman Soy Sauce, 2 eggs and 2 Tbsp. salt. Form mixture into 1 oz. balls. Heat vegetable oil in heavy sauté pan; brown meatballs on all sides. Transfer meatballs to large rondo. Add 6 cups Kikkoman Plum Sauce to rondo; bring to a simmer over medium heat. Simmer, covered, 5 to 10 minutes or until meatballs are cooked through. (Yield: 96 meatballs)

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and julienned, and 1 large pink grapefruit, sectioned. Toss well.

Heat a cast-iron skillet over high heat 3 to 5 minutes. Add 1/2 cup peanut oil. Lift chicken strips from marinade and add to pan one at a time. Fry until dark golden brown and crisp, about 1 minute per side. Divide salad among 6 serving plates. Arrange about 8 chicken strips on each salad. Garnish salad with thin slices of avocado and sprinkle with pumpkin seeds. Serve immediately.

(Serves 6)

CUMIN-SCENTED WARM CHICKEN SALAD
Here’s a perfect example of how Kikkoman Soy Sauce can add umami in a non-Asian context. Mixed with the bright flavors of lime, it gives both the chicken and the toasted pumpkin seeds in this Southwest-style salad intense, savory flavor. It’s tasty proof that soy sauce, citrus and protein, in the right balance, can create particularly bright and fresh-tasting umami flavors.

Whisk together 1/2 cup avocado oil, 1/4 cup lime juice, 3 Tbsp. Kikkoman Soy Sauce, 3 cloves minced garlic, 3 stemmed and minced serrano chiles, 1 Tbsp. toasted, crushed cumin seeds and 1 Tbsp. cornstarch. Slice 1 1/2 lbs. skinless, boneless chicken breast across the grain into 3” x 1/2” strips. Add chicken to marinade; toss to coat evenly. Refrigerate up to 4 hours.

In dry sauté pan over medium heat, toast 1/2 cup raw, unsalted pumpkin seeds until golden brown, shaking pan frequently. Remove from heat; add 2 Tbsp. lime juice and 2 tsp. Kikkoman Soy Sauce; shake vigorously until seeds are evenly coated. If necessary, shake pan over low heat until pumpkin seeds are dry.

Whisk together 1/2 cup extra virgin olive oil, 2 Tbsp. lemon juice, 1/4 tsp. salt and 1/2 tsp. black pepper. Add 5 bunches watercress, stemmed and torn into bite-size pieces, half a large jicama, peeled and julienned, and 1 large pink grapefruit, sectioned. Toss well.

Heat a cast-iron skillet over high heat 3 to 5 minutes. Add 1/2 cup peanut oil. Lift chicken strips from marinade and add to pan one at a time. Fry until dark golden brown and crisp, about 1 minute per side. Divide salad among 6 serving plates. Arrange about 8 chicken strips on each salad. Garnish salad with thin slices of avocado and sprinkle with pumpkin seeds. Serve immediately. (Serves 6)
Soy-Grilled Vegetables
Whisk together 1 cup extra virgin olive oil, 1/4 cup Kikkoman Less Sodium Soy Sauce, 3 Tbsp. white balsamic vinegar and 2 tsp. minced garlic. Cut vegetables such as red bell pepper, red onion, zucchini, yellow squash and eggplant into 1/2” slices. Grill; season with salt and pepper. Drizzle with olive oil mixture and chiffonade of fresh basil. Serve warm.

Roasted Vegetables
with Soy-Ginger Glaze
Combine 2 cups Kikkoman Soy Sauce, 1 cup olive oil, 1 cup water, 1/2 cup sugar and 2 oz. minced ginger. Place 6 lbs. assorted root vegetables (baby beets, baby carrots, small potatoes, shallots) in roasting pan; pour soy sauce mixture over vegetables. Roast in 400°F oven, stirring occasionally, about 1 hour or until vegetables are tender and liquid has reduced to a glaze.

Goma-ae Spinach
In blender, purée 1/2 cup toasted white sesame seeds, 1/3 cup dashi (Japanese soup stock) or water, 4 tsp. Kikkoman Soy Sauce and 2 tsp. balsamic vinegar; roast 5 minutes more or until lightly browned.

Baby Bok Choy, Potsticker-Style
Cut 3/4 lb. baby bok choy in half lengthwise; wash thoroughly. Place in wok, stem ends toward center. Sprinkle with 1 Tbsp. thinly sliced garlic. Add 1 Tbsp. Asian sesame oil and 1/2 cup water. Simmer until water evaporates and cut faces of bok choy are lightly browned. Remove from heat; drizzle with 1 tsp. Kikkoman Soy Sauce and a few drops of chili oil.

Goma-ae Spinach
In blender, purée 1/2 cup toasted white sesame seeds, 1/3 cup dashi (Japanese soup stock) or water, 4 tsp. Kikkoman Soy Sauce and 2 tsp. balsamic vinegar; roast 5 minutes more or until lightly browned.

Baby Bok Choy, Potsticker-Style
Cut 3/4 lb. baby bok choy in half lengthwise; wash thoroughly. Place in wok, stem ends toward center and cut faces down. Sprinkle with 1 Tbsp. thinly sliced garlic. Add 1 Tbsp. Asian sesame oil and 1/2 cup water. Simmer until water evaporates and cut faces of bok choy are lightly browned. Remove from heat; drizzle with 1 tsp. Kikkoman Soy Sauce and a few drops of chili oil.
AVOCADO CANELONES WITH TOMATO CAVIAR AND SOY AIR

Umami is in the air. Literally. This ultra-light avocado, tomato and jicama appetizer is enhanced with an ingenious “soy air,” made by whipping Kikkoman Soy Sauce, water and lecithin to create a frothy yet stable foam that brings out the umami of the tomatoes as it melts in the mouth. Tomato “caviar” (the seeds suspended in their gel) rounds out this stunning presentation.

Lightly oil a sheet of plastic wrap with olive oil. Peel 4 avocados with a vegetable peeler, keeping them whole. With peeler, shave thin slices of avocado, working from the top to the bottom. Carefully place slices on plastic wrap, overlapping slightly to create a sheet of avocado about 3” x 4”. Sprinkle lightly with salt. Repeat to make 8 sheets.

Slice off top and bottom of 8 plum tomatoes. Cut outer flesh away from seeds and pulp, keeping flesh in one piece and seeds intact. Cut flesh into 1/4” cubes; reserve seeds and surrounding gel. Combine tomato cubes with 1 cup diced jicama, 1 Tbsp. sesame seed and 1 Tbsp. sesame oil.

To make soy air, whisk 1 cup Kikkoman Soy Sauce, 1 cup water and 1 tsp. soy lecithin with hand blender until foamy.

To assemble the canelones, place ¼ cup tomato mixture across bottom of each avocado sheet. With plastic wrap, roll up like a sushi roll. Trim the ends; remove plastic wrap. Place 1 roll on each plate. Garnish with tomato seeds, microplaned yuzu zest and soy air. Drizzle with sesame oil. (Serves 8)
Dip whole small or sliced large mushrooms into beer batter; fry 4 minutes or until crisp and golden.

Portobello “Steak” Sandwich
Grill a large, stemmed portobello mushroom cap 3 to 4 minutes on each side or until tender and nicely grill-marked. Brush with 1 tsp. Kikkoman Soy Sauce and 1/2 tsp. balsamic vinegar; grill a minute longer on each side. Serve on griddled whole-grain hamburger bun with melted Gruyère cheese, caramelized onions and Umami Secret Sauce (see “Condiments” section).

Soy-Simmered Mushrooms
Combine 8 oz. stemmed shiitake mushrooms, 3 cups sake and 2 cups Kikkoman Less Sodium Soy Sauce in saucepan; bring to a simmer. Place parchment paper round directly on surface of mushrooms. Simmer 30 to 40 minutes or until mushrooms are tender. Drain and cool; cut mushrooms into quarters. Use in soups, vegetable sushi rolls or grain salads, or as a rice topping.

Beer-Batter Mushrooms
Place 1 1/2 lbs. Kikkoman Tempura Batter Mix in bowl. Gradually stir in 1 1/4 quarts ale or lager beer and 1/2 cup Kikkoman Soy Sauce, whisking just until smooth. Hold at room temperature no longer than 30 minutes. (Yield: 12 cups)

Soy-Seared Oyster Mushrooms
In hot, dry skillet, sear oyster mushrooms 1 minute on each side. Brush lightly with Kikkoman Soy Sauce and sear a few seconds longer or until lightly browned on each side. Serve with grilled steak, in salad or as a topping for rice.

Soy-Infused Mushroom Ragout
Trim and slice thinly 1 1/2 lbs. assorted wild and domestic mushrooms. Sauté in 1 Tbsp. butter over high heat with 1 large, finely minced shallot. When mushrooms release juices, add 1 oz. dried porcini or black Chinese mushrooms, softened in warm water, drained and minced. Cook over low heat until liquid is reduced by half. Add 1/2 cup chicken stock, 3 Tbsp. Kikkoman Soy Sauce and 1 Tbsp. dry sherry. Cook, stirring, until most of the liquid is evaporated. Add 1/2 cup heavy cream; cook, stirring until mixture is thick and cream coats mushrooms. Serve in baked polenta cups or puff pastry boxes.

Like Kikkoman Soy Sauce, mushrooms, truffles and other fungi can give foods instant umami. Combine them with soy sauce, and you can create even richer, meatier umami synergy.
MUSHROOM BARLEY SOUP

Umami minimalism: Just a few ingredients—fresh and dried mushrooms, aromatics, barley and stock—create astonishing synergy with Kikkoman Soy Sauce. Taste this soup before adding the soy sauce at the end, and then add it gradually. You shouldn’t notice any obvious soy sauce flavor, but you will experience the unmistakable quality of umami as you taste how the soy sauce brings out the earthy meatiness of the mushrooms while adding delicate, fermented notes with a hint of wine.

Soak 1 oz. dried porcini in 3 cups very hot water. When soft, strain through mesh sieve; reserve soaking liquid. Chop porcini coarsely, discarding any hard bits.

Heat 2 Tbsp. olive oil in soup pot over high heat. Add 1 lb. shiitake, cremini, portobello or button mushrooms, stemmed and sliced or roughly chopped, and 3 medium carrots, peeled and sliced. Cook, stirring occasionally, until vegetables begin to brown. Add 1 cup pearled barley; cook, stirring frequently, until barley begins to brown. Sprinkle with a little salt and plenty of pepper.

Add porcini; cook, stirring, for about a minute. Add 1 bay leaf, reserved soaking liquid and 3 cups vegetable, chicken or beef stock or water. Bring to a boil; lower heat. Cover and simmer 20 to 30 minutes or until barley is very tender. Add 1 to 2 Tbsp. Kikkoman Soy Sauce, to taste. (Serves 6)
A lot has changed since we started marketing our soy sauce in America 50 years ago, but one thing remains the same. Our core product, naturally brewed soy sauce, is still made just as it was more than 300 years ago—slowly fermented and aged like a fine wine for full flavor and rich umami qualities.

Over the last half-century, foodservice chefs and operators like you have embraced our soy sauce, teriyaki and other authentic seasonings and products. And you have used those products to create foods and flavors that have expanded America’s culinary horizons far beyond what any of us could have imagined back in 1957—from Asian to Mexican, Mediterranean and beyond. In other words, you’ve been looking to Kikkoman for umami enhancement all along.

As we celebrate our golden anniversary with you, we thank you for your support, and we look forward to your partnership for many years to come.