



ASPARAGUS GOMAE

35 MINUTES




4 SERVINGS

In the Japanese kitchen, gomaе refers to a dish, commonly a vegetable, dressed with a savory-sweet toasted sesame sauce. Here we give tender-crisp, skillet-cooked asparagus the gomaе treatment. Look for medium-size asparagus, ones that

are about the size of a pencil, and make sure to trim off the tough, woody parts at the base of the spears. This can be served warm, at room temperature or even lightly chilled.

Don't forget to dry the asparagus before adding it to the skillet. Any remaining water droplets will create steam and prevent browning.

INGREDIENTS

$\frac{1}{4}$	CUP SESAME SEEDS
1	TABLESPOON  <u>MIRIN</u>
1	TABLESPOON  <u>SOY SAUCE</u>
1	TABLESPOON  <u>SAKE</u>
2	TEASPOONS WHITE SUGAR
$\frac{1}{8}$ TO $\frac{1}{4}$	TEASPOON CAYENNE PEPPER (OPTIONAL)
1	TABLESPOON GRAPESEED OR OTHER NEUTRAL OIL
1½	POUNDS MEDIUM ASPARAGUS, TRIMMED AND CUT ON THE DIAGONAL INTO 2-INCH LENGTHS
	KOSHER SALT AND GROUND BLACK PEPPER

DIRECTIONS

In a 12-inch skillet over medium, toast the sesame seeds, stirring often, until lightly browned, 2 to 3 minutes. Cool completely, then pulse in an electric spice grinder or grind in a mortar with pestle until fragrant and coarse.

In a large bowl, stir together the sesame seeds, mirin, soy sauce, sake, sugar and cayenne (if using). In a 12-inch skillet over medium-high, heat the oil until barely smoking. Add the asparagus and $\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon salt, then cook, stirring only a few times, until lightly charred, about 3 minutes.

Add 3 tablespoons water, then immediately cover. Reduce to low and cook, stirring just once or twice, until the asparagus is tender-crisp and the pan is dry, 2 to 3 minutes. Add the asparagus to the bowl with the sesame mixture and toss to coat. Taste and season with salt and black pepper, then transfer to a serving dish.