

Edamame

If you've never had edamame in a Japanese restaurant, you're missing out on a real treat. You simply can't not like edamame. It's not weird. It's not spicy. It's not exotic. It's just lightly cooked soy beans. You can buy frozen edamame in grocery stores. But it's so easy and cheap to grow your own soy beans. As with the navy beans, you might have to buy them at the grocery store in the bulk section. But it is best to go on line and get soy beans that are bred for edamame. The soybeans I bought at the food co-op grew into beautiful 4 foot tall plants with an incredible number of bean pods. The only problem is that the pods were hairy! I'd prefer them to not be hairy, but they were tasty nevertheless.

To make edamame, wash the soy bean pods in cool water. Don't break open the pods. But if you have some loose beans, it's okay. Bring a pot of water to a boil. Put in a few handfuls of beans and boil for 5 minutes. Scoop them out with a slotted spoon into cool water to stop them from cooking. Bring the water in the pot to a boil again and put in more beans if you have them. Serve the warm beans with a generous sprinkle of coarsely ground salt.

To eat them, put a pod between your teeth and bite down a bit while you pull the pod away, letting the beans pop into your mouth with a bit of the salt.

If you're looking for a replacement for chips and other junk food, edamame is a great substitute. It's low fat and high in protein.

Beans are easy to grow and lots of fun. It's hard to screw them up. All they need is water, dirt and sun.