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WOK-SEARED BABY BOK CHOY WITH CHILI OIL & GARLIC

SERVES 4 / PREP TIME: 10 MINUTES / COOK TIME: 10 MINUTES

This quick stir-fry is perked up with spicy red chili oil, nutty sesame seeds, bold garlic, and fiery red pepper flakes.

1 tablespoon sesame seeds

4 heads baby bok choy, about 1 pound total

1½ tablespoons canola oil

3 garlic cloves, thinly sliced

½ teaspoon red pepper flakes

Sea salt, to taste

¼ cup low-sodium chicken broth

2 teaspoons Asian chili oil (or to taste)

1. In a dry, small sauté pan, toast the sesame seeds over medium heat until they turn golden brown and fragrant, 4 to 5 minutes. Transfer them to a plate and let cool.
2. Cut off the tough base from each head of bok choy. Separate the heads into individual stalks by snapping the stalks away from their cores.

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3. In a wok or a large sauté pan, warm the canola oil over medium-high heat. When the oil is hot and shimmering in the pan, add the garlic and red pepper flakes and cook, tossing and stirring constantly until they are fragrant but not browned, 20 to 30 seconds.
4. Add the bok choy and a pinch of salt and cook, tossing and stirring, until the bok choy just begins to wilt, 1 to 2 minutes.
5. Add the chicken broth and cook, stirring occasionally, until the bok choy is just tender and the broth evaporates, 1 to 2 minutes.
6. Add the chili oil, stir it in well to coat the bok choy, and then remove from the heat.
7. Stir in the sesame seeds and transfer the bok choy to a warmed bowl. Serve immediately.

Recipe and photo from Williams-Sonoma's New Flavors for Vegetables, by Jodi Liano (Oxmoor House, 2008).
