

## *From Dragon Flower Mountain*



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-Ed.*

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### **The Most Important Ingredient Part 2**

"No teaching that is unkind can be the true teaching of Buddha." Surangama Sutra

Some may have thought that I was kidding or being metaphorical in what I wrote last time but I was in deadly earnest. If you ask what is the most important thing in preparing food you will be told: fresh ingredients, good pots and pans, organic vegetables, cookbooks, years of experience.....

But I say, "Love".

And I don't mean without effort - training always involves effort - "put your back into it!" as my father used to say.

Resist the urge to listen to the news on the radio at the same time, pick up and put down with care everything you handle, don't get in too much of a fluster, don't disparage the ingredients or, and this is important, don't use something that you think has gone off just in order not to "waste". I once didn't want to "waste" a bag of corn chips and ended up having to "waste" an entire casserole that I made with them. The chips turned out to be very stale and made the dish uneatable.

Get your ego out of the way when you cook - let go of notions, judgments and the critical, carping mind. And cook, with care and attention and love.

In gassho,  
HKōten