Miso-Tofu Hot Pot with Ramen

1 Tbsp. toasted sesame seed oil

1 garlic clove, grated

2 tsp grated peeled fresh ginger

1 bunch scallions, white parts sliced, green parts thinly diagonally sliced, for garnish

2 tsp chile bean sauce (toban djan like Lee Kum Kee)

¼ cup Junmai sake like Hakushika Junmai Yamadanishili)

2 Tbsp. White miso

4 cups warm Shiitake Dashi, divided

1 Tbsp soy sauce

5 large Napa cabbage leaves, cut into 1 ½ inch pieces

3 oz. white beech mushrooms, trimmed and separated into clusters

2 medium carrots, peeled and thinly diagonally sliced

7 oz. firm silken tofu, drained and cut into 4 (1/2-inch thick) slabs

Coarsely ground toasted sesame seeds, chile oil, kurozu (Japanese black vinegar) and Quick-Pickled Shiitakes, for serving.

5 oz. fresh or thawed frozen ramen noodles like Sun Noodle, cooked according to package directions

Heat sesame oil in a 3-quart classic-style donabe or ceramic pot over medium heat. Add garlic, ginger and white scallion pieces. Cook, stirring constantly until softened and fragrant, about 2 minutes. Push mixture to one side of pot and add chile bean sauce to empty side. Cook, stirring constantly until fragrant, about 30 seconds. Stir in sake, incorporating garlic, ginger and white scallion pieces and cook for 1 minutes. Whisk together miso and ¼ cup shiitake dashi in a small bowl until smooth and set aside. Stir soy sauce and remaining 3 ¾ cups shiitake dashi into pot. Cover and bring to a simmer over medium-low heat.

Uncover and stir in cabbage, mushrooms and carrots. Add tofu. Cover and cook until tofu is heated through and vegetable are crisp-tender, about 4-5 minutes. Stir in miso mixture. Using a spider or slotted spoon, divide vegetables and tofu between 2 serving bowls, about 2 cups each. Ladle about 1 cup of broth into each bowl, reserve remaining broth in donabe. Garnish with ground sesame seeds, chile oil, kurozu, pickled shiitakes and green scallion pieces.

Reheat remaining broth (about 1 ½ cups) in donabe over medium-low heat until steaming. Add ramen to broth and let stand until heated through. Serve a second course with hot pot.