

Spicy Lemon & Black Pepper Tofu



Elizabeth Hay, Springsong's 2013 Guest Author, offers up this spicy vegan dish. She and her husband, Mark Fried, a noted translator, often steam broccoli to toss in at the end. She forwarded the recipe along with an Ottawa bird report: "Yesterday morning saw ten wood ducks in the pond down the street at Brewer Park. Two purple finches at the feeder just now."

INGREDIENTS

200 G (~7 oz) firm tofu

JUICE of 1 lemon

1 clove garlic, minced

½ TSP chopped red chile (fresh or jarred)

Black pepper

1 TBSP oil

½ TSP corn flour (cornstarch)

75 ML (~¼ cup) vegetable stock

1 TSP runny honey or agave nectar

Fresh coriander (cilantro), to garnish (optional)

SERVES 1

METHOD

Cut the tofu into 1cm slices, and press to remove any excess liquid—use a tofu press or lay the tofu in a single layer between two tea towels, and top with a heavy object for 5-10 minutes.

In a small bowl, mix the lemon juice, garlic, red chile, and a very generous grind of black pepper. Add the slices of pressed tofu, and spoon some of the marinade over the top. Leave for at least 5-10 minutes.

When you're ready to cook, heat a dash of oil in a frying pan, and when sizzling, add the marinated tofu. Shake off any pieces of garlic left on the tofu, as they are likely to burn in the pan. Cook over medium heat for a few minutes each side, until crispy.

Pour the excess tofu marinade into a small bowl, and add the corn flour. Mix thoroughly until smooth (except for the lumps of garlic and tofu bits!)

Pour the lemon sauce over the tofu, along with the vegetable stock. Cook for a few more minutes, stirring carefully as the tofu can be delicate. Toss in broccoli if desired. When the sauce is thick and sticky, add the honey or agave, and cook for 1 more minute. Serve warm, topped with fresh coriander.