

Tofu and Vegetables (aka Tofu stuff)

The original basis for this recipe came from the Nutrition Action Newsletter – for stir-fried broccoli and shrimp. The recipe has come a long way from there.

Ingredients:

Extra firm tofu (1 container)

Soy sauce

Hoisin sauce

Sesame seed oil

Olive oil

Fresh garlic – 1 head – more if you wish (I often use more)

Fresh ginger – about a 1 inch root section

1 vidalia onion

Brown rice – 1 cup

Kale – about 8 cups or more uncooked – feel free to use much more

Another vegetable or 2 – options include

- string beans – try steaming them for a few minutes before so they are a little soft
- zucchini – you can use slices, chopped, or shredded – shredded zucchini disappears into the dish – you can sneak this in for those who claim not to like zucchini
- pumpkin – yes, I even add pumpkin when it is in season – cut it, seed it, and put in in the oven at 350 for 20 minutes or so to soften it – then cut off the skin and you have pumpkin

I prefer to use a cast iron wok for this – but it can be done in a large skillet or pan.

First, chop the onion, peel and chop the garlic into small bits, cut the skin off the ginger and also chop it into small bits. Cut the tofu into blocks about ¼ to ½ inch slices, then rotate 90 degrees and cut again – very easy to do with firm tofu and a chef's knife. This will produce ½ inch x ½ inch x 2 inch blocks (like little 4 x 4 poles). Put 1-2 Tbsp of soy sauce, 1 Tbsp of hoisin sauce, a handful of onion, garlic and ginger all into a small bowl. Then put the tofu in, cover with plastic wrap, and invert multiple times to coat the tofu with this marinade. Let this sit for an hour (less if you are in a hurry, more time if you have the time).

Get the rice going – I prefer brown rice. Heat 2.5 cups of water to a boil – toss in just a little salt. Then add 1 cup of brown rice. Bring that to a boil, then turn down to very low simmer and cover. When the water seems to be gone, turn off the heat and let it sit for 10 minutes or more to absorb the rest of the moisture.

Put 2-3 Tbsp of olive oil into the wok/pan. I like to add about 1 tsp of cumin seeds and let them cook as the oil heats up. When the oil is hot, throw in about ½ of the onion. When it starts to get a bit translucent, throw in the about ½ of the ginger and garlic. Stir around a bit, and before the garlic browns, toss in the kale and cover with a lid. Throw in a couple Tbsp of water if you need to. When the kale starts to shrink, toss in your other vegetables. Cook until the kale is limp and the other vegetables are well mixed in. This might take just a few minutes.

Scoop all this out on a plate or in a bowl. Add another 1-2 Tbsp of olive oil to the wok, and toss in the rest of the onion. When translucent, toss in the garlic and ginger. Stir around for a minute or two, then add the tofu with some of the marinade (don't pour the marinade in – just scoop out the tofu with some

of the marinade). Stir for about 3-5 minutes – when the tofu is starting to brown a bit, throw in the the vegetable mix. Stir well, and at the last minute add 1 Tbsp or so of sesame seed oil, and turn off the burner.

Either serve on the rice, or mix the rice into the wok, and serve all together. This is a full meal – protein, carbs, and vegetables. No need for a side dish – though I usually have another vegetable on the side. LOT OF VEGETABLES – the key to good health. When tomatoes are in season, it is nice to chop up a cold tomato and add it as a garnish on the hot meal.