

Roasted Tofu with Easy Peanut Sauce

4 servings of tofu,
4 to 6 servings of peanut sauce

INGREDIENTS

Roasted Tofu

1 block (10 to 16 ounces [280 to 450 grams]) extra-firm tofu (do not use silken style), drained

1 tablespoon (15 milliliters) olive oil, optional

1 tablespoon (15 milliliters) low-sodium soy sauce or tamari

1 teaspoon (5 milliliters) honey or agave

1 clove garlic, minced, optional

Easy Peanut Sauce

½ cup (120 milliliters) unsalted, natural creamy peanut butter (or sunflower seed butter for those with peanut allergies)

1½ tablespoons (22.5 milliliters) low-sodium soy sauce or tamari

2 tablespoons (30 milliliters) brown sugar or date paste

½ lime, juiced

1 teaspoon (5 milliliters) chili garlic sauce (can substitute 1/8 teaspoon ground cayenne pepper plus 1 clove minced garlic)

½ teaspoon (2.5 milliliters) freshly grated ginger

Approximately 4 tablespoons (60 milliliters) hot water

¼ cup (10 grams) chopped cilantro, optional

¼ cup (25 grams) thinly sliced scallion, optional



To serve as a main dish, make the tofu as described in the recipe. However, I regularly make the roasted tofu alone—without the peanut sauce—but cut it into cubes before cooking. This makes a great add-in for curries or stir-fries.

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Pressing tofu: The key to making good roasted tofu is to press out the excess water. To do this, wrap with a paper towel or clean, absorbent kitchen towel, then set on a plate and put something with at least a couple pounds of weight on top of it (I use a stock pot, large can, or another plate with something on top to weigh it down). Let sit for at least 15 minutes, and then unwrap and drain off excess water. Ideally, press for longer if you want firmer, chewier tofu.
2. While tofu is being pressed, preheat the oven to 400°F (200°C). Prepare a baking sheet with one of the following to prevent sticking: parchment paper, silicone mat, non-stick spray, or wiped on in a thin layer oil.
3. After pressing the tofu, cut it into ½-inch thick slices or 1-inch cubes.
4. In a shallow baking dish or mixing bowl, whisk together olive oil (optional), soy sauce, honey, and garlic. Add tofu and gently turn to coat the tofu on all sides.
5. Place tofu in a single layer on the baking sheet, making sure that no pieces are touching. Bake in the oven for 15 minutes, turn tofu over and bake another 15 minutes, or until lightly browned. (If omitting oil, it will not brown as much.)

6. Peanut sauce: While tofu is baking, whisk together peanut sauce ingredients in a small mixing bowl. Add hot water until the sauce is the thickness that you want. It will still be fairly thick with 4 tablespoons (60 milliliters) of water added. If you like your sauce thinner, add another 1 to 2 tablespoons (15 to 30 milliliters) of hot water.
7. Serve tofu with peanut sauce on the side or drizzled over top. Garnish with chopped cilantro and sliced green onions, if desired.

NOTES

- Make this a meal by including steamed veggies and brown rice.
- Use the leftover peanut sauce as a dip for fresh vegetables.
- To use tofu as an add-in for another dish, follow instructions, making sure to cut tofu into cubes or crumble by hand into irregular sized bits (which develop a nice crispness on the edges, making crevices that are great for holding onto sauces and seasonings) rather than slices.
- If you want the crispy style of tofu that seems lightly breaded with a sauce clinging to it like you may have tried in restaurants, after Step 3, move tofu to a clean bowl and add 1 tablespoon (15 milliliters) arrowroot starch or cornstarch, tossing or turning to coat. Then, follow roasting instructions. Tofu cooked this way must be served immediately after cooking (either with a dipping sauce or tossed in a stir-fry sauce) or it will end up soggy/gummy. To get a truly crisp exterior, pan-frying works better than roasting for this, but a decent result can occur with roasting if done with skill.
- For peanut allergies, sunflower seed butter is an excellent alternative in the Easy Peanut Sauce recipe. The flavor and appearance are very similar. Just make sure to get nut or seed butters without other added ingredients for this recipe. Sunflower seed butter is a good replacement for peanut butter in any item that won't be baked. Baked, the chlorophyll in the sunflower seeds turns items very green, though the flavor is fine.

Nutritional Info (per ¼ recipe roasted tofu without sauce): Calories 138, Total Fat 8.7 g, Saturated Fat 1.2 g, Cholesterol 0 mg, Sodium 112 mg, Total Carbohydrate 4.9 g, Dietary Fiber 1.3 g, Sugars 0.6 g, Protein 10.5 g, Calcium 14%, Iron 10%

Nutritional Info (per ¼ recipe roasted tofu with peanut sauce): Calories 346, Total Fat 24.4 g, Saturated Fat 4.2 g, Cholesterol 0 mg, Sodium 333 mg, Total Carbohydrate 19.1 g, Dietary Fiber 2.8 g, Sugars 11.2 g, Protein 18.3 g, Vitamin C 11%, Calcium 16%, Iron 13%, Potassium 11%, Zinc 8%

► To view the video for this recipe, and all electronic resources associated with the Culinary Medicine Curriculum, please see <https://bit.ly/culinarymededucation>.
