

CHINESE

Crispy Sweet & Sour Tofu



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Sometimes it's nice to stick with the simple things. Keep dinner easy with lightly crisped tofu doused in traditional tangy sweet & sour sauce! It's perfect served over rice or with sautéed Chinese broccoli or bok choy.

**** makes 4 servings**

Sweet & sour sauce:

2 tsp cornstarch mixed with 2 tsp water

2 tsp vegetable oil

2 garlic cloves, minced

1/2 tsp fresh grated ginger

1/2 tsp chili pepper flakes

1/3 C unseasoned rice vinegar

1/2 C water

1/2 C agave nectar (maple syrup or sugar)

2 tbsp. tomato paste

2 tbsp. low-sodium soy sauce (or gluten-free tamari to make it a gluten-free dish)

1/4 tsp sea salt

tofu & batter:

1 brick of medium firm tofu (or firm tofu)

3 C vegetable oil (for frying)

1 C brown rice flour

1 tbsp. cornstarch

1/2 tsp sea salt

1/2 tsp garlic powder

1/4 tsp ground pepper

1 C cold soda water

Drain the brick of tofu from the packaging water and cut into bite size cubes. Allow the cubes to sit on a clean tea towel or paper towel to get rid of excess water while you prepare the sauce.

To make the sauce mix cornstarch and water in a small bowl and set aside.

In a small saucepan heat 2 teaspoons of vegetable oil over medium-low heat. Add minced garlic, ginger, and chili pepper flakes. Stir for 30 seconds to 1 minute until fragrant, being careful not to burn the garlic or ginger. Then add in remaining sauce ingredients and whisk together over medium heat until just bubbling. Then whisk in the cornstarch and water mixture. Whisk frequently for 10-12 minutes until thickened and reduced. Remove from the heat and set aside while you prepare the crispy tofu.

Heat vegetable oil in a heavy bottomed pot to 355 F to 365 F.

Prepare the batter by combining rice flour, cornstarch, sea salt, garlic powder, and ground pepper together in a mixing bowl. Do not add the cold soda water until your frying oil is ready.

When you're ready to fry, stir in soda water to the flour mixture and combine well. If the mixture seems too thin just add a little bit more rice flour and combine. It should be a smooth, slightly thick pancake batter consistency. You want it to stick and coat the cubes of tofu!

Place the tofu cubes in the batter and toss to coat evenly. Drop each one at a time in the frying oil delicately. Fry in batches of 5 to 6 pieces and do not overcrowd the pot.

Fry for 2 to 2 1/2 minutes. If some stick together you can gently separate them in the frying oil with a slotted fryer spoon. Remove crispy tofu from the oil with the slotted spoon and let them sit on paper towel to absorb excess oil. Continue this process with remaining tofu cubes.

Heat up the sauce again if needed right before serving. In 2-3 batches you can coat the crispy tofu with sauce by adding some sauce to a large bowl and tossing crispy tofu cubes until coated evenly. Serve over rice or vegetables.

NOTE: if you want to bake the tofu all you need to do is toss the cubes in 2 tablespoons of cornstarch in a large bowl and lay out in an even layer slightly spaced apart on a large parchment lined baking sheet. Bake in a preheated 425 F oven for 30 to 40 minutes until crispy and golden brown. Then coat in warm sweet and sour sauce right before serving!