

SZECHWAN EGGPLANT TOFU STIR-FRY WITH SPICY GARLIC SAUCE

24 oz organic extra firm tofu
24 oz long skinny Asian eggplants, about three
sunflower oil, as needed
cornstarch, as needed
1/4 cup Shaoxing rice wine
2 tablespoons soy sauce
2 tablespoons aged Chinese black vinegar
1 tablespoon chili paste
1 tablespoon Sriracha hot sauce
3/4 cup water
1 teaspoon vegetable bouillon granules
2-to-3 tablespoons palm sugar
1 tablespoon Maggi liquid seasoning
one or two red bell peppers, deseeded, cubed
one Anaheim chili pepper, deseeded, cubed
one Jalapeno chili pepper, deseeded, sliced
10 garlic cloves, sliced
3-inch piece fresh ginger, peeled, grated
2 tablespoons cornstarch mixed with 3 tablespoons water
6 green onions, white and green parts, cut into 2-inch pieces
fresh cilantro leaves, optional, for garnish
steamed Jasmine rice

Prepare tofu. Cut block lengthwise into long rectangles, divide into squares and the slice crosswise into wedges. Place between paper towels and drain.

Meanwhile, prepare marinade. In a bowl, whisk together rice wine, soy sauce, black vinegar, chili paste, hot sauce, water, bouillon granules, sugar and liquid seasoning.

Cook Tofu. Roll wedges in cornstarch. Fry in oil until golden on both sides and drain on paper towels once more. Transfer fried tofu into prepared marinade and set aside for 20-to-45 minutes.

Prepare eggplant. Trim both vegetable edges and cut lengthwise into 2-inch pieces. Cut each piece into half crosswise, then cut once more diagonally; creating four wedges. Stir-fry over medium-high heat, in batches and adding oil as needed, until seared all over but not browned. Transfer out of the pan.

Sauté peppers, garlic and ginger in oil; being careful not to brown. Set aside. Remove fried tofu from marinade using a slotted spoon. Bring marinade to a boil in a wok or a large pan. Once bubbles start to form, whisk in cornstarch-water mix and cook until thickened. Return vegetables and tofu to pan and gently toss until coated. Add green onions and cook until thoroughly heated and sauce is thickened to a glaze. Garnish with cilantro leaves if desired and serve with a side of steamed Jasmine rice.