

## **CHOPPED VIETNAMESE SALAD with Fried Tofu**

This might actually be my favorite salad, ever. I first started making it when Gwyneth Paltrow shared it on her website three years ago and it's been in regular rotation around here ever since. We make it least twice a month. I always double the recipe so we can have it two nights in a row, or for dinner one night, plus a few lunches. My favorite way to serve it is with fried tofu that's been lightly coated in corn starch, it's light, crispy and the coating absorbs the fabulous Thai dressing.

Chopped Vietnamese Salad with Fried Tofu (adapted from Gwyneth Patlow's: It's All Good)

### Salad Ingredients.

half head medium size napa cabbage, shredded  
2 small heads bok choy, shredded  
1 large carrot, peeled and cut into matchsticks  
small handful of each: basil, mint, cilantro, roughly chopped  
1/2 cucumber, thinly sliced on the bias  
1/2-1 thai red chili, seeded and very thinly sliced\*  
1/2 cup roasted, salted peanuts

### Dressing Ingredients.

1/4 cup freshly squeezed lime juice  
1 tablespoon rice wine vinegar  
2 teaspoons soy sauce  
1/4 cup fish sauce  
1/4 teaspoon salt  
2 tablespoons honey  
1 garlic clove, minced  
1/2 inch fresh ginger, peeled and minced  
1 small shallot, minced

### Tofu Ingredients.

14oz firm tofu, drained  
a few tablespoons corn starch  
a few tablespoons canola or vegetable oil

### Tofu Directions.

Dry the tofu a little by pressing it with a few paper towels. Slice it into 1" cubes. Toss the cubes in a large bowl with the corn starch, lightly coating them. Heat the oil in a large, nonstick skillet over medium high heat until it's shimmering. Carefully toss the cubes in, one at a time. Using tongs, gently flip them until all the sides are a light golden brown. Remove them from the pan to a paper towel lined plate.

**Directions.**

Make the dressing by mixing together all of the ingredients in a jar or medium sized bowl.

To assemble the salad, simply toss the bok choy, cabbage, carrot, cucumber, fresh herbs all together with the lots of the dressing (I usually use it all), use tongs to transfer it to plates. Top with the peanuts and thai red chili's.

Place a few cubes of the fried tofu on top of each of the salads.

\*If you're serving this to your kids, you might hold off adding the thai red chili until serving time. That way you can add it to your salad but not theirs.... although, that being said, we didn't put the chili's on Gigi's last night and she picked them all off of our salads and ate them. The original dressing recipe also calls for a bit of hot sesame oil, which I usually omit, and I use more chili than her recipe.

If you are doubling this recipe for leftovers, I recommend keeping the ingredients compartmentalized as follows: the salad greens can be stored together, the carrot and cucumber together, the thai chili on it's own, the peanuts on their own, and the herbs on their own. It's really easy to toss it all together when you're ready, along with the dressing, and keeps things from getting wilted and soggy. I would definitely double the dressing recipe if you're going to double the salad recipe.

A final, important note about serving this salad as leftovers... Even if you're only making lunch for yourself, I highly recommend serving it alongside a plate of my Crisp Oven French Fries. It's about balance, right?

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