

THAI COCONUT SOUP WITH UDON NOODLES AND TOFU

I love making Thai dishes at home. The combination of heat and coconut milk in Thai food is my favorite thing. This soup is pretty easy to make and it was absolutely delicious. Whenever I'm cooking something a little complicated, like Thai food, I always try to get everything prepped so that when it comes to the actually *cooking*, it's easy and fast. This soup is so satisfying and flavorful. I will definitely be making it again, and again, and again.

Ingredients.

Tofu.

1 14oz package of Firm Tofu (this needs to be drained so make sure to note the extra time in the directions)
1 Tablespoon honey
3 Tablespoons soy sauce
2 Tablespoons sesame oil
vegetable oil

Sofrito.

2 stalks of lemongrass, peel off the outside layer and quickly chop the tender centers of the stalks
2 Fresno red chilies, seeded and deveined
2-3 inches of fresh ginger, peeled and quickly chopped
4 garlic cloves
1 large shallot, quickly chopped
1/4 cup water
2 tablespoons fish sauce

Soup.

1 1/2 tablespoons vegetable oil
1 14.5oz can coconut milk
2 tablespoons creamy peanut butter
1 quart chicken broth
1 tablespoon soy sauce
1 tablespoon brown sugar
1/3 cup lime juice (about 1 1/2 limes)

10oz Udon noodles

Garnish.

1 large shallot, thinly sliced
Cilantro, trimmed
Sesame oil

Directions.

To drain the tofu, wrap it in paper towels, and set it on a plate. Place another plate on top to help press out the water. Let the tofu drain for about an hour. Mix together your honey, soy sauce, and sesame oil to make a marinade for the tofu. After draining for one hour, cut the tofu into 1" cubes, place in a bowl or dish and pour in the marinade. Gently toss and allow it to sit while you prep all your other ingredients for the soup.

Put all the ingredients for your sofrito in a food processor (lemongrass, chilies, ginger, garlic, water, fish sauce, and shallot) and purée it. Set aside.

In a bowl, gently whisk together all of your soup base ingredients except for the oil (coconut milk, peanut butter, chicken broth, soy sauce, brown sugar, and lime juice). Set aside.

Heat your vegetable oil in a large pot over medium heat. Put in your sofrito and cook it, stirring constantly for a few minutes. Once it smells really fragrant and sweet add in your coconut milk/broth mixture. Bring to a low simmer and cook the soup for 15-20 minutes.

In the meantime, bring another large pot of water to a boil. While you're waiting for it to come to a boil, heat a large non-stick pan over medium-high heat. Add a bit of vegetable oil to the pan and allow it to heat up. Carefully add your tofu cubes to the pan using a pair of tongs. Sauté the tofu until it's nice and golden brown on all sides. Transfer the tofu to a plate and set aside.

By now your water should be boiling, toss your Udon noodles in and cook them until they are al dente, then drain them.

Stir the soup well and ladle it into bowls, add in some noodles, top with tofu, cilantro, and the thinly sliced shallot. Drizzle with a tiny bit of sesame oil and serve immediately.

Serves 4.

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