

MEATLESS MONDAY: SLOW COOKER TOFU TIKKA MASALA

Serves: 6

Prep: ≤60 mins

Cooking Time: 2-3 hrs (*on a high heat setting.)

Type: Main Meal

Tools: Chopping boards, sharp knife, manual juicer, kitchen paper, mixing bowl, frying pan + lid, frying spatula, slotted spoon, food processor, slow cooker

Courtesy of: Eat2Health Blog



Here's another great plant-based curry from the Eat2Health Kitchen: 'slow cooker tikka masala'! The true origins and ingredients can vary; with ours being 100% non-authentic but it's absolutely delicious! Yes, a spicy, creamy, flavoursome and tomato-based curry which is also cheap and easy to prepare! It could arguably it's one of the more popular Indian dishes in Britain, but we'll let you decide amongst yourselves!

Ingredients

800g	Firm Tofu (= 2*Tetra paks)	½- ¾ tsp	Salt
2	Lemons (or 60ml of concentrated lemon juice)		Ground Black Pepper
5	Garlic Cloves (about 20g)	2-3	Tins Chopped Plum Tomatoes (400g/each)
1	Brown Onion (large; about 200g)	20g	Tomato Purée
2	Chillies (1 Red & 1 Green; about 40g)	1-3 tsp	Agave or Fruit Sweetener
100g	Ginger Root	50g	DF Margarine
1	Green Bell Pepper (200g)	250ml	Oat Cream (1 carton)
2g	Mild Paprika		Brown Basmati or Long grain Rice
2 tsp	Olive Oil		(about 60-70g/person)
	Tikka Masala spice blend: (1g of Ground Turmeric, 3g of each: Ground Cumin, Ground Coriander & Garam Masala)		

Directions

1. Drain and press the tofu between two heavy chopping boards or plates for 20-30 mins to express any excess water.
2. In the meantime, prepare the veggies! Juice the lemon. Peel and finely dice the garlic and onion. Wash, remove the stem and dice the chillies. Wash, peel and then grate the ginger root. Wash, remove the stem and core and then finely chop the bell pepper.
3. Drain the excess water from the tofu. Pat it dry with some kitchen paper. Place it onto a chopping board (if preferred). Chop it as chunky or as small as desired. Transfer it into a dish; add the lemon juice, 2g paprika and 2 tsp olive oil. Toss to coat. Cover and place in the refrigerator to marinate for the moment. **Tip:** *If preferred, marinate your tofu overnight; (especially) in some mild curry spices instead!*

4. Heat a large, non-stick frying pan over a medium-low heat. Add 1 tbsp of rapeseed oil, or spray it with some low-fat cooking oil instead. Add the garlic and onion. Gently fry for 1-2 mins. Add the chillies, root ginger and bell pepper. Gently fry for a further 2 mins or until softened. Add the **tikka masala spice blend**. Season it with ½- ¾ tsp of salt and a few grinds of black pepper. Stir to coat. Gently fry it for a further 30 seconds or until fragrant. Remove from the heat.
5. Prepare the sauce! Place the tomatoes into a food processor. Add the onion mixture, 20g tomato purée and 1-3 tsp agave. Cover with the lid. Blend until 'smoothish' and a bit of texture is left.
Tip: If you do not own a food processor, place the ingredients into a large mixing bowl and purée the ingredients using a hand-held stick blender.
6. Remove the tofu from the marinating liquid, but do discard the liquid. Heat the same frying pan with 1 tbsp of rapeseed oil over a medium heat. Add the tofu (in batches if necessary). Gently fry the tofu for 6-8 mins or until lightly browned. Add the tomato mixture and 3-5 tbsp of the reserved marination liquid. Stir to combine. Cover with a lid. Simmer for 3-5 mins or until the mixture is hot. Remove from the heat but do not turn off the stove top; reduce the heat to a medium-low.
7. Gently transfer the curry mixture into the slow cooker. Cover with a lid. Add 50g DF margarine into same the frying pan as before (don't worry if there is a little sauce left in it!). Allow it to melt. Remove from the heat. Pour the melted margarine into the curry. Stir to combine. *Tip: Make sure all of the tofu is covered in the curry sauce.* Cover with the lid. Cook for 2-3 hrs on a high heat setting (ours took 2.5hrs.) Turn off the heat. At the end of cooking, pour 250ml oat cream into the curry. Stir through. *Tip: to help reduce the fat content, you can use less cream and/or some thickened DF milk instead, use less DF margarine or skip this step entirely; the combination of margarine and cream is what makes this curry so creamy!*
8. Serve warm. Ladle the curry into a large serving bowl. Serve with steamed green beans, fresh tomato (or side veggies of choice!), a dollop of plain soya yoghurt (if desired), homemade pilau rice or some of our tasty 'Savoury Flatbread', wholemeal pitta bread or your own homemade paratha instead! *Tip: for an extra pop of colour, garnish with some fresh coriander leaves!*

NB: Reheat and use within 3-4 days; reheat gently over a medium-low heat (do not allow it to boil).

Enjoy!

Notes:

- *We used a basic lemon, oil and paprika marinade on our tofu; it's a very neutral taste that was lost within the curry. If you are looking for the tofu to have a slightly independent taste to the curry sauce, opt for marinating your tofu overnight in a mild or hot curry powder (and lemon juice mixture) instead. It's also good to note that because of the nature of the recipe (it's plant-based!), making a 'curry paste' is not necessary, unless you are planning on marinating the tofu with it. However, slow cooking the tofu in the curry helped to infuse it with some of its wonderful flavours. Yum!*
- *It's truly a great comfort food, but without the typical caloric content of authentic recipes... although this curry is still a bit 'richer' than the ones we would typically eat! So use our spices or your favourite tikka masala spice blend. Don't like oat cream? You can only try using a soya or coconut cream instead; we opted for oat for its neutral and unsweetened taste.*