FIVE-SPICE BAKED TOFU WITH NOODLES AND PEANUT PESTO

This recipe is adapted from Eric Tucker and Bruce Enloe, *The Artful Vegan*. It was developed at the vegan Millennium Restaurant in San Francisco.

Tofu
1 lb firm or extra-firm tofu, cut into short strips
3 tbsp soy sauce or Bragg's Aminos
3 tbsp mirin
1 tsp toasted sesame oil
1 tsp sugar, preferably natural sugar
1 tsp five-spice powder
½ tsp black pepper

Noodles with Peanut Pesto
3/4 lb fettuccine or rice noodles
1/2 cup natural peanut butter
1/2 bunch cilantro, leaves removed from stems
(use fresh basil if you don't like cilantro)
Juice of 1 lime
1 tbsp light or white miso
2 cloves garlic
1 tbsp minced fresh ginger
1 tsp sesame oil
½ tsp salt
Fresh mint leaves (if available)
1/2 tbsp or more hot sauce (optional, or serve at table)
1/2 cup water, or more as needed

Vegetables
1/2 cup sherry, white wine or water
1/2 red onion, sliced
1 clove garlic
1 lb green beans, trimmed , or 1 lb broccoli crowns, chopped
1 red bell pepper, sliced

Garnish: 1/2 cup chopped, roasted peanuts*
*250 degree oven, 2-3 min; watch carefully

The tofu piece:
Pat a block of tofu dry on clean dishtowel. Cut the tofu into short strips (try 3 slices horizontally, 6 slices vertically, & halve those). Place on a nonstick baking sheet. In a small dish, mix the marinade ingredients and spoon it over the tofu. Bake at 350 degrees about 10 min, turn strips and bake another 10-12 min. Put on a plate and set aside.

The noodle-pesto piece: Cook pasta to *al dente* doneness. In a food processor, combine the pesto ingredients. When the pasta is done, toss it in a large serving bowl with the pesto sauce.

The Vegetable Piece: In 1/2 cup liquid or more as needed, sauté the vegetables. Try to keep the brightness of the green vegetable and red bell pepper.

When all the "pieces" are done, fold the vegetables and tofu into the pasta, leaving some of each for the top of the dish. Top the dish with the remaining vegetables and tofu; garnish with some of the toasted peanuts, and serve the rest at the table. Hot sauce on the side is nice!




