

SPRING 2009 VEGAN CANDLELIGHT DINNER: “Essentially Asian”

Hot & Sour Soup

(Serves 4)

4 Chinese dried mushrooms (if unavailable, use open-cup mushrooms)
4 ½ ounces firm tofu
2 ounces canned bamboo shoots
3 cups vegetable bouillon or water
½ cup peas
3 tablespoons dark soy sauce
2 tablespoons rice wine vinegar
1 tablespoon sweet chili sauce
¼ teaspoon chili garlic sauce
Salt and pepper, to taste
Sesame oil, to serve

1. Place the Chinese dried mushrooms in a small bowl and cover with warm water. Leave them to soak for about 20 to 25 minutes.
2. Drain the mushrooms and squeeze out the excess water, reserving this. Remove the tough centers and cut the mushrooms into thin shreds. Shred the tofu and bamboo shoots.
3. Bring the vegetable bouillon or water to a boil in a large pan. Add the mushrooms, bean curd, bamboo shoots and peas. Simmer for 2 minutes.
4. Mix together the soy sauce, rice wine vinegar, sweet chili sauce and the chili garlic sauce with 2 tablespoons of the liquid reserved from soaking the mushrooms.
5. Stir the soy sauce mixture into the soup with the remaining mushrooms liquid. Bring the mixture to a boil and season to taste with salt and plenty of pepper. Simmer for a further 2 minutes.
6. Ladle the soup into warmed bowls and serve with a few drops of sesame oil sprinkled over the top of each.

Bun (pronounced “Boon”) Style Rice Noodle Salad

Raw Salad Ingredients:

2 cups shredded romaine
Chopped green onions (optional)

Bean Thread

8 ounces bean thread

1. Cook bean threads for two minutes in boiling water, drain and rinse. DO NOT OVERCOOK. These are served at room temperature, not hot.

Cooked Topping (served hot over shredded romaine and bean thread)

8 ounces extra firm tofu, cubed and deep fried
2 tablespoons canola oil
2 cups fresh bean sprouts
Stir fry vegetables (bok choy, napa cabbage, red bell pepper, mushrooms, green onions)
1 tablespoon soy sauce
1 tablespoon teriyaki glaze
1 teaspoon sweet chili sauce

1. Stir fry vegetables in canola oil. Toss with soy sauce, teriyaki glaze and sweet chili sauce.
2. Assemble as follows: Place shredded romaine and chopped green onions on plate. Add drained bean thread. Top with hot stir fry vegetables and fried tofu cubes.

Napa Bundles

8 large Napa cabbage leaves
2 baby corn cobs, sliced
1 carrot, finely chopped
1 celery stalk, chopped
4 scallions, chopped
4 water chestnuts, chopped
2 tablespoons unsalted cashews, chopped
1 garlic clove, chopped
1 teaspoon grated fresh ginger root
1 ounce canned bamboo shoots, drained, rinsed and chopped
1 teaspoon sesame oil
2 teaspoons soy sauce

1. Place the Napa cabbage leaves in a large bowl and pour over boiling water to soften them. Let stand for 1 minute and drain thoroughly.
2. Mix together the baby corn cobs, chopped carrot, celery, scallions, water chestnuts, cashews, garlic, ginger and bamboo shoots in a large bowl.
3. In a separate bowl, whisk together the sesame oil and soy sauce. Add this to the vegetables and stir well until all the vegetables are thoroughly coated in the mixture.
4. Spread out the Napa cabbage leaves on a chopping board and divide the filling mixture between them, carefully spooning an equal amount on to each leaf.
5. Roll up the Napa cabbage leaves, folding in the sides, to make neat parcels. Secure the parcels with toothpicks.
6. Place in a small heatproof dish in a steamer, cover and cook for 15 to 20 minutes, until the parcels are cooked.
7. Transfer the vegetable rolls to a warm serving dish. Serve with a soy or chili sauce.

Stir Fry Spinach

3 tablespoons canola oil
8 ounces fresh spinach
6 ounces canned bamboo shoots, drained and rinsed
1 garlic clove, crushed
Pinch of salt
1 tablespoon light soy sauce

1. Heat canola oil in a preheated wok or large skillet, swirling the oil around the bottom of the wok until it is hot.
2. Add the spinach and bamboo shoots to the wok and cook for 1 minutes.
3. Add garlic to the mixture in the wok and cook for a further 30 seconds.
4. Stir in light soy sauce and salt and continue cooking until spinach leaves have wilted.

Orange & Almond Cake with Dark Chocolate Ganache

Orange & Almond Cake
1 ¼ cups flour
1 ¼ cups almond meal
2 teaspoons baking powder
¾ cup light soft brown sugar
½ cup soy milk
½ cup vegetable oil
Juice of 1 orange
Zest of 1 orange

1. Preheat the oven to 350 F.
2. Combine the flour and almond meal in a large bowl.
3. In a separate bowl, whisk together the sugar, soy milk, oil, orange juice and zest.
4. Add the wet ingredients to the dry ingredients and mix well.
5. Pour the mixture into a cake tin.
6. Bake for about 25-30 minutes (convection oven), or until the cake browns very slightly on top and a knife comes out clean when poked into the middle of it.
7. Leave the cake in the tin for around 10 minutes, then turn it out onto a cooling rack and allow to cool for an hour or so.

Vegan Icing

2 tablespoons Vegan Margarine

½ teaspoon Vanilla Extract

1 cup Confectioners Sugar

1. Cream margarine with electric mixer. Add vanilla. Gradually add sugar, beating well on medium speed. Scrape sides and bottom of bowl often. Beat at medium speed until desired consistency.
2. Spread vegan icing between cake layers.

Dark Chocolate Ganache

1 tablespoon vegetable oil

2 ½ tablespoons soy milk

3 ½ ounces dark chocolate, chopped up into small pieces.

1. Heat the oil and soy milk in a double boiler.
2. Once they are warm (but not too hot, you don't want the soy milk to boil), add the chocolate and stir until melted.
3. Remove from heat and let it cool (stirring the mixture every now and then).
4. Once the ganache is mostly cool, then you can pour it over the cake and smooth it around so that it covers it all over.