



Featured Recipes

Bowls

A few weeks ago we were in Portland and had a quick dinner at a vegan restaurant called Blossoming Lotus. I enjoyed a delicious creation called an Incan Bowl, a mixture of quinoa, beans, tofu and steamed kale topped with a spicy peanut sauce, and I couldn't wait to get home and try my own version! They also had a Monk Bowl and a Mayan Bowl, made with rice and an assortment of vegetables and sauce. This can be a quick meal if you have some favorite sauces in your refrigerator. Just make the quinoa or rice, steam a few veggies (frozen are ok also), drain and rinse a can or two of beans, and top with your favorite sauce. If you want to make a sauce from scratch, then it will take a bit more time. The tofu is optional and your choices of vegetables will make this dish different each time you prepare it.

Incan Bowl

Preparation Time: 15-30 minutes

Cooking Time: 15 minutes

Servings: 4

1 ½ cups uncooked quinoa
3 cups water
6-8 cups assorted chopped vegetables (see hints below)
1-2 cups sautéed tofu cubes (see hints below)
1 ½ cups cooked beans of your choice (optional)
Sauce of your choice (see hints below)

Rinse the quinoa well and place in a pot with the water. Bring to a boil, reduce heat, cover and simmer for about 15 minutes until all liquid is absorbed.

Steam the vegetables just until tender. Remove from heat and place in a bowl.

To serve, place a scoop or two of the quinoa in a medium bowl (or on a plate). Layer some of the vegetables over the quinoa, followed by the tofu (and beans, if you wish). Top it all off with a couple of tablespoons of sauce of your choice.

Hints: This can be made with any variety of quinoa. Try the red one for a beautiful presentation. Chop the vegetables into similar sized pieces so they steam in about the same length of time. Try broccoli, carrots, snow peas, snap peas, broccolini, asparagus, and don't forget the kale. Top this with a couple of tablespoons of sauce, such as an Asian Ginger Sauce (recipe below), Peanut-Hoisin Sauce (recipe below), Thai Peanut Sauce (recipe below), BBQ Sauce, Szechwan Sauce (recipe below), or your favorite oil-free salad dressing. Lately our favorite variety of this is red quinoa, steamed asparagus, snow peas and lacinato kale, Asian Marinated Tofu cubes (see recipe below), topped with Peanut-Hoisin Sauce.

Monk Bowl

Preparation Time: 15-30 minutes

Cooking Time: 45 minutes

Servings: 4

1 ½ cups uncooked brown rice
4 cups water
6-8 cups assorted chopped vegetables (see hints below)

1-2 cups sautéed tofu cubes (see hints below)
1 ½ cups cooked beans of your choice (optional)
Sauce of your choice (see hints below)

Place the rice and water into a saucepan and bring to a boil. Reduce heat, cover and simmer for about 45 minutes until tender.

Steam the vegetables just until tender. Remove from heat and place in a bowl.

To serve, place a scoop or two of the rice in a medium bowl (or on a plate). Layer some of the vegetables over the rice, followed by the tofu (and beans, if you wish). Top it all off with a couple tablespoons of sauce of your choice.

Hints: This can be made with any variety of brown rice. Or use instant brown rice or frozen brown rice to save some time. Chop the vegetables into similar sized pieces so they steam in about the same length of time. Try broccoli, carrots, snow peas, snap peas, broccolini, asparagus, and don't forget the kale. Top this with a couple of tablespoons of sauce, such as an Asian Ginger Sauce (recipe below), Peanut-Hoisin Sauce (recipe below), Thai Peanut Sauce (recipe below), BBQ Sauce, Szechwan Sauce (recipe below), or your favorite oil-free salad dressing. Or turn this into a Korean-style Bibimbap by adding some kimchi on top of the vegetables and tofu and mixing some Korean kochu chang (spicy red pepper paste) into the whole thing.

Mayan Bowl

Preparation Time: 15-30 minutes
Cooking Time: 15-45 minutes
Servings: 4

1 ½ cups uncooked brown rice
4 cups water

OR

1 ½ cups uncooked quinoa
3 cups water

2 cups steamed corn
4 cups assorted chopped vegetables
1 ½ cups cooked beans
Salsa or Enchilada Sauce (see hints below)

Place the rice and water into a saucepan and bring to a boil. Reduce heat, cover and simmer for about 45 minutes until tender. OR Rinse the quinoa well and place in a pot with the water. Bring to a boil, reduce heat, cover and simmer for about 15 minutes until all liquid is absorbed.

Steam the vegetables just until tender. Remove from heat and place in a bowl.

To serve, place a scoop or two of the rice in a medium bowl (or on a plate). Layer some of the vegetables over the rice, followed by the cooked beans of your choice. Top it all off with a couple tablespoons of sauce of your choice.

Hints: This can be made with any variety of brown rice. Or use instant brown rice or frozen brown rice to save some time. Chop the vegetables into similar sized pieces so they steam in about the same length of time. Try broccoli, carrots, snow peas, snap peas, broccolini, asparagus, and don't forget the

kale. Top this with a couple of tablespoons of sauce, such as a fresh salsa or Enchilada Sauce (recipe below).

Asian Marinated Tofu

I have been doing a lot of marinated and sautéed tofu lately because it tastes so much better than the baked tofu that is available in markets. Be sure to use extra firm tofu in this recipe or the tofu will tend to fall apart.

Preparation Time: 5 minutes

Resting Time: 30 minutes

Cooking Time: 10 minutes

Servings: variable

20 ounces extra firm tofu
2 tablespoons rice vinegar
2 tablespoons light miso
1 tablespoon soy sauce
1 tablespoon tahini
1 tablespoon agave nectar
2 teaspoons mirin

Drain the tofu and cut into small cubes.

Place the remaining ingredients in a small bowl and whisk until smooth. Pour over the tofu and toss to coat well. Let rest for at least 30 minutes, mixing occasionally to make sure the tofu is well covered with the marinade.

Turn the tofu and the marinade into a large non-stick sauté pan. Dry fry for about 10 minutes, turning occasionally with a spatula to make sure the cubes are well browned on all sides.

Baked Tofu

Preparation Time: 5 minutes

Marinating Time: 10 minutes

Baking Time: 25-30 minutes

20 ounces extra firm tofu
¼ cup soy sauce
1/8 cup rice vinegar
1 teaspoon agave nectar
Dash sesame oil (optional)

Drain tofu and slice into ¼ inch pieces. Place in a large flat baking dish. Combine the remaining ingredients and pour over the tofu slices. Allow to marinate for at least 10 minutes and up to 1 hour. (Or place in the refrigerator and marinate overnight.)

Preheat oven to 375 degrees.

Remove from marinade and place on a non-stick baking sheet. Bake for 25-30 minutes, turning once halfway through the baking time. It should be brown and crispy on the outside. Remove from oven and cool. Slice into strips or cubes for use in recipes calling for baked tofu.

Hints: This tastes much better (and is less expensive and healthier) than the baked tofu found in

packages in many markets and natural food stores. Other seasonings may be added as desired, such as garlic, ginger, balsamic vinegar, or rosemary, to change the flavor of the tofu. It's also delicious just marinated in plain soy sauce. The marinade may be saved in a covered jar in the refrigerator a couple of weeks for later use. The tofu may also be cubed before baking with slightly crispier results.

Sauces

Try some of these sauces, or one of your favorites, over the bowl combinations above.

Szechwan Sauce

Preparation Time: 10 minutes

Cooking Time: 5 minutes

Servings: makes 1 ½ cups

1 ½ cups water
5-6 green onions, chopped
2 tablespoons soy sauce
1 ½ tablespoons cornstarch
¾ tablespoon minced fresh ginger
1 clove garlic, crushed
1/8 teaspoon crushed red pepper
Dash hot sauce (such as Sriracha)

Combine all ingredients in a saucepan and mix well. Cook and stir over medium heat until mixture is thickened and clear, about 5 minutes.

Peanut-Hoisin Sauce

This is a higher-fat choice because of the peanut butter.

Preparation Time: 10 minutes

Servings: makes 1 cup

½ cup natural chunky peanut butter
½ cup water
2 tablespoons hoisin sauce
1 tablespoon soy sauce
½ tablespoon agave nectar
2 teaspoons chili garlic sauce
2 teaspoons tomato paste
1 teaspoon lime juice
½ teaspoon grated fresh ginger
Dash sesame oil

Place all ingredients in a food processor and process briefly until well combined but not smooth. Pour into a covered container and refrigerate until ready to use. May be heated before serving, if desired.

Hints: Use over grain or noodle dishes, or as a topping for potatoes or vegetables.

Asian-Ginger Sauce

Preparation Time: 5 minutes

Cooking Time: 5 minutes

Servings: makes 1 ½ cups

¾ cup water
½ cup low sodium soy sauce
¼ cup rice vinegar
1 tablespoon mirin
1 tablespoon agave nectar
1 teaspoon crushed garlic
1 teaspoon grated fresh ginger
½ teaspoon crushed red pepper
2 tablespoons cornstarch

Combine all ingredients in a saucepan and whisk until smooth. Bring to a boil while stirring and cook and stir until thickened. Serve warm over grains and vegetables.

Thai Peanut Sauce

This is a higher fat choice because of the peanut butter. However, I have used almond milk with coconut extract in place of the usual coconut milk, so that fat is eliminated. (Most Thai peanut sauces use coconut milk in the preparation.)

Preparation Time: 5 minutes

Cooking Time: 5 minutes

Servings: makes ¾ cup

½ cup almond milk
¼ cup peanut butter
1 tablespoon soy sauce
½ tablespoon agave nectar
1 teaspoon lime juice
1 teaspoon chili garlic sauce
1/8 teaspoon coconut extract
1-2 tablespoons chopped fresh cilantro (optional)

Place all ingredients in a blender or food processor and process until smooth. Pour into a sauce pan and heat through before serving. Serve warm over grains and/or vegetables.

Enchilada Sauce

Preparation Time: 5 minutes

Cooking Time: 5 minutes

Servings: makes 2 ½ cups

1 8 ounce can tomato sauce
1 ½ cups water
2 tablespoons cornstarch
1 ½ tablespoons chili powder
¼ teaspoon chipotle powder
¼ teaspoon onion powder
1/8 teaspoon garlic powder

Combine all ingredients in a saucepan until well mixed. Cook and stir over medium heat until thickened.

Salads

Here are a couple of new potato-based salads for an end of summer treat.

Caesar's Potato Salad

This recipe uses a variation of the Caesar Salad Dressing developed by Miyoko Schinner. We have a large potato garden going again this year, so I'm always looking for new ways to use potatoes. I use a mixed variety of potatoes for more color and flavor. The avocado may be omitted for a lower fat version.

Preparation Time: 20 minutes

Cooking Time: 15 minutes

Servings: 6

2 pounds assorted fingerling or baby potatoes (red, white, purple)
½ pound sugar snap peas
½ cup, peeled, thinly sliced daikon radish
¼ cup chopped green onions
½ cup chopped avocado (optional)
2 tablespoons almond meal (see hints below)
2 large cloves garlic, pressed
3 tablespoons Dijon mustard
3 tablespoons nutritional yeast flakes
2 tablespoons soy sauce
3 tablespoons lemon juice
½ to 1 teaspoon chipotle paste (see hints below)

Cut the potatoes into bite-sized pieces and drop into boiling water. Reduce heat and simmer for about 10 minutes until almost tender. Add the snap peas and cook an additional 2 minutes. Drain and place in a large bowl. Cool slightly, then add the daikon, green onions and avocado (if using). Let rest while making the dressing.

Combine the almond meal, garlic, mustard and nutritional yeast in a bowl and mix to make a paste. Add the soy sauce, lemon juice and chipotle paste and whisk until smooth. Pour over the vegetables and toss gently to mix. Serve warm or at room temperature.

Hints: Any type of radish may be used in this recipe. I prefer the milder ones. If you are lucky enough to find Watermelon radishes in your area, try them in this recipe! Almond meal is available in packages at Trader Joe's. Or you can make your own by processing raw almonds until they become a fine powder (but not too much or they will turn into almond butter). Store the unused almond meal in the freezer indefinitely. Chipotle paste is made by Pflieger Pfoods, Inc. and is sold at Whole Foods or specialty markets. It adds a nice smoked flavor and a bit of heat to foods.

Dilled Potato Salad

This may also be made with just potatoes, which is a favorite with my grandchildren.

Preparation Time: 15 minutes (dressing should be made 1 day ahead)

Cooking Time: 12-15 minutes

Servings: 6-8

Dressing:

2 12.3 ounce packages soft silken tofu
3 tablespoons lemon juice

3 teaspoons agave nectar
1 package Simply Organics Creamy Dill Dip

Combine the tofu with the lemon juice and agave in a food processor and process until very smooth. Add the packaged mix and process again. Pour into a covered bowl and refrigerate overnight (if possible).

Salad:

2 pounds small new potatoes
½ cup chopped celery
½ cup sliced radishes
¼ cup chopped green onions

Cut the potatoes into bite-sized pieces and drop into boiling water. Reduce heat and simmer for 12-15 minutes until tender. Drain and place in a large bowl. Add the remaining vegetables. Pour about 2/3 cup of the Creamy Dill Dressing over the potato mixture and toss gently to mix. Serve at once.

Hints: Try this with the potatoes and quartered Brussels sprouts (sounds strange but it is delicious). Reserve any remaining dressing to use as a dip for fresh vegetables, steamed broccoli or Brussels sprouts.