What Can You Do with...

Tofu?

Tofu is a traditional food that dates back to China about 2,000 years ago, and is still widely used in Asian cuisine today. Also known as bean curd, it is made by curding soymilk and pressing it into blocks. This process is very similar to the way cheese is made from cow's milk. One-half cup of tofu provides a good source of protein, calcium, and iron, as well as other beneficial plant compounds. Economical and eco-friendly, soy protein is one of nature's few "complete" plant proteins, meaning it offers a good balance of all of the essential amino acids in one serving. Tofu comes in many varieties, ranging from soft or silk, firm, or extra firm. Its mild flavor takes on the tastes of other foods and sauces with which it is prepared.

Here are some easy and tasty ways to add tofu to your daily meals:

1. Press tofu by placing a block of tofu between layers of paper towels and setting something heavy on it for about 30 minutes. Pressed tofu retains a meatier texture and accepts the flavors of sauces more readily.

2. Stir-fry diced, extra-firm tofu with fresh or frozen veggies, soy sauce, garlic and ginger.

3. Slice tofu into wedges and roll in seasoned whole grain breadcrumbs. Pan-fry with a drizzle of olive oil for a delicious chicken-less nugget.

4. Substitute silken tofu for cream cheese in a classic cheesecake recipe.

5. Marinate cubed extra-firm tofu with portabella mushrooms and asparagus and roast it in the oven.

6. Grill marinated slabs of extra firm tofu into a "steak"; top it off with a pile of sautéed red onions and serve with brown rice and leafy greens.

7. Build a powerhouse breakfast by scrambling shredded or cubed tofu, yellow summer squash, bell peppers, and spices.

8. Reinvent your taco night with tofu. Grab a whole grain tortilla and load it up with sautéed tofu, black beans, shredded cheese, avocado slices, and salsa.

9. Curried tofu is sure to stimulate your senses. Saute firm tofu with curry powder, garlic, onions, and tomatoes.

10. Stir cubed tofu into your favorite marinara sauce to serve over pasta.