

Tofu and potato vindaloo submitted by Debbie Westwood

This recipe from Goa, India, is traditionally made using pork or lamb. Originally adapted from a Portuguese recipe that used pork, wine (“Vin”), and garlic (“Aloo”); it is a reflection of the influence of the Portuguese in the area. Here I’ve modified it to use tofu and potatoes, but you could also use mushrooms, tempeh, seitan, sweet potatoes instead of, or as well as, the tofu and potatoes.

I originally made this dish growing up in England where Indian food is commonplace, if not always particularly good. When I arrived in the US, I was appalled to discover there were almost no Indian restaurants, and the ones that did exist were mediocre. That was back in 1995, and I’ve been making this (and other Indian recipes) ever since.

This recipe is an adaptation of one by Madhur Jaffrey. It looks very complicated with a long list of ingredients but is not as hard as it may first appear.

Whole Spices

- 2 tsp whole cumin seeds
- 2-3 dried red chilis
- 1 tsp black peppercorns
- 1 tsp cardamom seeds (the contents of about 24 green pods – discard the pods, keep the black seeds!)
- 3” stick cinnamon
- 1.5 tsp black mustard seeds
- 1 tsp fenugreek seeds

For the paste

- 5 tbsp white wine vinegar
- 1 tsp salt (can be omitted)
- 1 tsp light brown sugar

For sautéing

- 2-3 tbsp oil (I use less, but you’ll find it easier with at least 3 tbsp)
- 1 yellow onion; peeled and thinly sliced
- 2-3 tbsp water
- 1 tbsp oil (if needed)
- 1” cube fresh ginger; peeled and coarsely chopped
- 1 small head of garlic (about 10-15 cloves); peeled and trimmed
- 2-3 tbsp water

Ground Spices

- 1 tsp ground coriander seeds
- 0.5 tsp ground turmeric

Everything else

- 1 cup water
- 1 package extra firm tofu (I like Trader Joe’s high protein tofu)
- 1 lb white or red potatoes

Method:

1. Grind all the whole spices in a grinder (a coffee grinder dedicated to just spices works very well).
2. Put the ground spices in a bowl and add the vinegar, salt, and sugar.
3. Heat the oil in the pan and fry the onions over low to medium heat until brown and crispy. This will take as long as 30 minutes – don't hurry it!
4. Turn off the heat and remove the onions with a slotted spoon and allow to cool.
5. Purée the onions in a food processor or blender with 2-3 tbsp water.
6. Add the puréed onions to the spice and vinegar mixture.
(This is the vindaloo paste and you can freeze it ahead of time. Or make double and freeze half for later!)
7. Purée the garlic and ginger in a food processor or blender with 2-3 tbsp water.
8. Heat the remaining oil in the pan over medium heat – add more oil if needed.
9. Add the puréed garlic and ginger to the pan and stir for a few seconds.
10. Add the ground coriander and ground turmeric and stir for another few seconds.
11. Add the tofu, potato (or whatever vegetables / plant based protein you are using).
12. Add 1 cup of water and bring to a boil.
13. Cover tightly, reduce heat to low, and simmer for about an hour.

Serve with any, or all, of the following:

- mild vegetable dish (aloo gobi is a good choice)
- dhal
- basmati rice (white or brown) or vegetable biryani
- naan bread
- cucumber raita (use unsweetened cashew or soy based yogurt)
- mango chutney