

SPICY TOFU OR PANEER WITH LIME LEAVES (TAHU GORENG)

Serves 3 to 4

Ingredients:

Firm Tofu: 250 gms

(Alternatively, you could use Paneer and follow the same recipe. I make it interchangeably and it works just fine).

Dried red chillies: 20 - 25 depending on the size of the chillies

Garlic: 3 pods

Galangal (or Thai Ginger): ½ inch pc

Kaffir lime leaves: 6, torn

Long / String beans: 6 cut into 2" long pcs

Sugar: ½ tsp

Salt: to taste

Oil: 3 tbsp

How I did it:

- Cut the dried red chillies into 2. Shake it off so that the seeds come out. Throw the seeds away. Add hot water enough to soak the red chillies and microwave it for 15 seconds. You can also soak it in hot water for 10 minutes. This will soften the dried red chillies. Now wash the chillies under running water gently rubbing it and removing any seeds you can. This step is important to ensure that the chilli paste does not become overly spicy.
- There are many varieties of Tofu available in the market. Use the "firm" tofu to make this dish. If you use tofu that is soft or silk tofu, the tofu will crumble. If you do not have tofu and assuming you have paneer (or Indian home made cheese), use that instead. Cut the tofu / paneer into 1" cubes. Rub some salt on this Tofu and keep aside.
- Pound garlic using a mortar and pestle.
- Heat 2 tbsp of oil in a non-stick pan. Add the tofu cubes and lightly fry it until gets a light brownish color. Keep aside.
- Heat oil in a heavy bottomed pan. Add the pound garlic. Stir fry for 30 seconds on low heat. Add the sliced onions and sugar. Soften the onions on medium heat stirring frequently (approx. 5 mins). Add the chilli paste (about 3 tbsp) and salt. Cook the chilli paste on slow heat until the oil separates. This may take up to 10 mins. Once done, add the Galangal to this mix. Stir for another 2 mins.
- Add 1/3 cup water to moisten this paste. Next, add the long beans and cook it on medium heat stirring occasionally. If it is dry, add some more water (3 - 4 tbsp). Remember that the long beans should be crunchy and not overcooked.
- Now add the pan fried tofu / paneer cubes along with the torn kaffir lime leaves.
- Combine everything together to ensure that the tofu / paneer is uniformly coated with the chilli paste. Stir for another 5 minutes on low heat.
- Serve with rice. As this dish is high on heat, I prefer to have something cooling along with it like mix vegetable clear soup and an everyday cucumber/tomato light salad.