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Soba with spicy peanut sauce

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Buckwheat noodles, or soba, do contain some wheat, so this is not for gluten-free diets. However, the health benefits of soba are legion, as it is high in protein, vitamins and fibre.

Adapted from *The Planet Organic Market Cookbook*.



SHUTTERSTOCK IMAGES

Soba can be found at Asian food stores such as T&T, health-food stores or the organic food aisles of big chains such as Loblaws. So can tamari, a Japanese soy sauce that contains little or no wheat, and brown rice vinegar. You can substitute soy sauce for the tamari and use rice vinegar if you can't find the brown rice version. The recipe calls for toasted sesame oil, but I substituted 100 per cent sesame oil, which is cheaper.

INGREDIENTS

Tofu:

340 g firm tofu, drained

1 tbsp canola oil

Pinch sea salt

Dressing:

2 cloves garlic, chopped

1/2 cup cilantro (leaves and tender stems)

2 tbsp fresh ginger, peeled, chopped

1/2 tsp or more chili flakes

2 tbsp toasted or regular sesame oil

1 tbsp canola oil

1/2 cup natural peanut butter

1/2 cup or more tamari

3 tbsp brown sugar

3 tbsp each: brown rice vinegar

Up to 3 tbsp hot or pasta-cooking water

Noodles:

1 lb (454 g) soba noodles

2 tbsp toasted or regular sesame oil

1/2 cup cilantro, chopped

1/4 cup green onions, chopped

340 g golden tofu

2 tbsp roasted unsalted peanuts, chopped, or toasted sesame seeds

DIRECTIONS

For tofu, cut tofu into 1/2-inch cubes. Heat oil in non-stick skillet over medium-high heat. Fry tofu until light golden, turning to brown all sides. Drain on paper towels; sprinkle with salt. Set aside.

For dressing, add garlic, cilantro, ginger and 1/2 teaspoon chili flakes (or more to taste) to bowl of food processor. Pulse until finely chopped. Add oils, peanut butter, 1/2 cup tamari and sugar. Process until well combined.

Scrape down sides. Add vinegar. Add more tamari to taste. Thin with hot water or pasta-cooking water to desired consistency. Store covered in refrigerator until ready to use.

For noodles, bring large pot of water to boil. Season with salt. Cook noodles according to package directions, about 6 minutes. Drain and rinse with cold water. Drain.

Mix sesame oil, cilantro and green onions. Toss with cold noodles. Refrigerate until ready to use.

Before serving, toss noodles with dressing and garnish with peanuts or sesame seeds.

Makes about 4 to 6 servings.

Star-tested by Kim Honey

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