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Don't dismiss tofu until you've tried it

■ It's a healthy protein that's also affordable. Season it, grill it or use it as an ingredient in a recipe.

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For The Associated Press

Tofu is a great flavor sponge. And because it readily soaks up seasonings, it's a wonderful choice for marinating.

We used the flavors of Jamaican jerk chicken – slightly sweet, slightly spicy – to enhance an easy baked tofu. Served with pineapple salsa, this dish can be served as an appetizer or as a main dish. Try it with rice or in a sandwich.

Be sure to buy extra-firm water-packed tofu for this recipe. The vacuum-packed varieties are too tender. If you have extra time, the best way to squeeze the water from tofu is to place it between multiple sheets of paper towels in a shallow bowl. Place a small plate over it and weigh it down slightly. Refrigerate it for several hours, draining periodically.



pepper

¼ teaspoon red pepper flakes

1½ tablespoons extra virgin olive oil

Wrap tofu with paper towel and place on plate. Put it in microwave for about a minute to remove excess moisture.

In a food processor put garlic, shallot and give it a quick whirl. Add Italian parsley, cilantro and give it another whirl.

In a bowl place chopped herbs and add vinegar, salt, black pepper, red pepper flakes and extra virgin olive oil. Mix together.

Cut tofu in cubes in the same size as cherry tomatoes.

Place two tofu cubes and two tomatoes alternately on skewers. Brush tofu with the sauce and grill for 3 to 4 minutes on each side. Brush a couple more times until grill mark is shown. Brush tofu again before serving.

Makes 10 skewers.

TOFU CRABCAKES WITH SRIRACHI TERIYAKI REMOULADE

Recipe courtesy of Chef Michael Galasso of the River Palm Terrace Restaurant, Edgewater, N.J.

Makes 6 to 8 servings

8 ounces organic super firm tofu

8 ounces jumbo lump crabmeat

1 ounce unsalted butter



MARINATED CARIBBEAN TOFU WITH PINEAPPLE SALSA

Start to finish: 2 hours
(30 minutes active)
Servings: 6

For the tofu:

- 14-ounce package extra-firm tofu
- ½ cup orange juice
- 2 tablespoons lime juice
- 3 tablespoons soy sauce
- 2 tablespoons brown sugar
- ½ teaspoon allspice
- 1 teaspoon garlic powder
- 2 teaspoons grated fresh ginger
- 1 teaspoon ground black pepper
- ¼ teaspoon cayenne
- ¼ teaspoon cinnamon
- ½ teaspoon dried thyme

For the salsa:

- 1 cup fresh pineapple, diced
- 2 Roma tomatoes, diced
- ¼ cup fresh cilantro leaves, chopped
- 2 tablespoons chopped fresh chives
- 1 clove garlic, minced
- ½ teaspoon salt

Drain the tofu and slice into ½-inch-thick slabs. One at a time, press each slice between paper towels to remove any excess water. Place the tofu in a large zip-close plastic bag.

In a small bowl, whisk together the orange juice, lime juice, soy sauce, brown sugar, allspice, garlic powder, ginger, black pepper, cayenne, cinnamon and thyme. Pour the mixture over the tofu in the bag, then slosh around to evenly coat. Refrigerate for at least 1 hour.

Meanwhile, to make the salsa, in a medium bowl toss together the pineapple, tomatoes, cilantro, chives, garlic and salt. Set aside.

Once the tofu has marinated, heat the oven to 375°F. Coat a rimmed baking sheet with cooking spray.

Arrange the tofu slices on the prepared baking sheet. Bake for 15 minutes, then flip the slices and bake for another 15 minutes. Turn on the broil-



Photos courtesy of House Foods America

Tofu's bland flavor becomes a plus instead of a minus once you've learned how to use it in well-seasoned recipes. The extra-firm variety can be grilled, which gives it even more flavor, as in the Grilled Tofu and Tomato Skewers with Herb Sauce, above. Tofu is a surprise ingredient in the crabcakes, at left, served with a remoulade that includes teriyaki and srirachi sauces. One additional way to add flavor is with a salsa, as in the recipe for Caribbean Tofu with Pineapple Salsa.

er and broil the tofu until the tops brown lightly, 1 to 2 minutes. Serve topped with pineapple salsa.

Nutrition information per serving (values are rounded to the nearest whole number): 107 calories; 32 calories from fat (30 percent of total calories); 4 g fat (0 g saturated; 0 g trans fats); 0 mg cholesterol; 13 g carbohydrate; 7 g protein; 1 g fiber; 819 mg sodium.

Try your hand at grilling tofu for a delicious and healthy alternative to summer dining. You'll be rewarded with a cholesterol-free, satisfying protein that's wallet friendly and good for you.

Tofu even goes from the grill to your plate in half the time of most

meats, allowing you to spend more time with guests.

To help grillers, House Foods America has introduced a new line of Super Firm Tofu to its family of products, which offers a texture that will stand up to the grill.

The company also offers some grilling tips and a couple summery recipes to try.

Tofu Grilling Tips

■ Coat your grill with non-stick cooking spray or a bit of oil to prevent tofu from sticking.

■ Use skewers as a way to hold tofu in place. Bamboo, flavored, and rosemary skewers will impart extra flavor.

■ Drain the tofu and use paper towels to absorb excess water before

you marinate. This allows tofu to soak in more of the marinade flavors.

■ Always pre-heat grill before use. Allow tofu to cook for 6 to 7 minutes on each side, brushing occasionally with extra marinade.

GRILLED TOFU AND TOMATO SKEWERS WITH HERB SAUCE

Makes 10 skewers

- 1 package of extra firm tofu
- 20 cherry tomatoes
- 10 bamboo skewers

For the sauce:

- 1 clove garlic
- 1 large shallot
- ½ bundle Italian parsley
- ½ bundle cilantro
- 2 tablespoons red wine vinegar
- ½ tablespoon Kosher salt
- ½ teaspoon freshly ground black

- 3 ounces all-purpose flour
- 1 tablespoon Dijon mustard
- 1 tablespoon horseradish
- 1 bunch scallions, chopped
- 2 eggs
- 1 cup Japanese bread crumbs (panko)
- Salt and ground black pepper to taste

- ½ cup milk
- 1½ cups mayonnaise
- 2 tablespoons sriracha sauce*
- 2 tablespoons teriyaki sauce

Microwave tofu for 1 minute to eliminate excess moisture.

Melt butter on a low heat until completely melted. Stir in flour to create a roux; mixture should look like wet sand.

Gradually whisk milk into the roux to create a Bechamel sauce. Simmer for 5 to 7 minutes; set aside and let cool.

In a mixing bowl, place 8 ounces of tofu that has been crumbled, 8 ounces crabmeat, chopped scallions, Dijon mustard, horseradish, salt, and pepper. Add the Bechamel sauce to the mix, folding in without breaking to much of the crabmeat.

Shape mixture into six to eight cakes. Dredge in flour, dip in beaten egg and then into panko to coat.

For remoulade: Combine mayonnaise, sriracha, and teriyaki. Reserve and chill.

In a skillet over medium-high heat, pan fry crabcakes until golden brown on each side. Then place crabcakes in a 350°F oven for 5 minutes.

Serve crabcakes with the remoulade and garnish with sliced lemon and chopped scallions.

* **Sriracha sauce** is a paste of chili peppers, distilled vinegar, garlic, sugar and salt. Sriracha is a common condiment in many Asian restaurants and increasingly used in American and European homes.