

do you know that tofu is a 2000-year old health food that first made its appearance in China during the Han dynasty? Legend has it that tofu was actually created accidentally by a Chinese cook who added nigari to flavour a batch of pureed, cooked soy beans. He ended up with a wonderful discovery – tofu.

Although tofu tastes bland on its own, the simple food transforms magically when cooked with other ingredients or condiments, absorbing flavour like a sponge and turns itself into a fine cuisine. Drizzled with a spicy or plain sauce, tofu tastes wonderfully soft with the full flavour of the added condiments like bean paste or spicy sauce.

Health food

Nutrition wise, tofu is rich in high-quality proteins. Other than being a staple protein source for vegetarians, people who have difficulty digesting meat can also rely on tofu for their protein source.

Studies have also suggested that tofu prevents certain diseases such as osteoporosis and cancer. The Health Promotion Board recommends consuming 25 grams of soy protein daily to reduce cholesterol levels.

Tofu family

Basically there are two types of tofu– silken or regular tofu. As both types of tofu have different texture and respond differently when cooked, they are suited for different types of cooking and dishes.

Silken tofu is softer than regular tofu and will break easily if not handled properly. In fact, silken tofu is so soft that you can just mash it with your tongue and feel the soft texture dissolving in your mouth. So the best way to handle silken tofu is to be gentle with it. Try not to cook silken tofu too much, deep frying or stir frying it is a big no. Soft as silk, silken tofu tastes best when added in soups, steamboat, salad dressings and shakes.

As the texture of silken tofu is creamy, it is

Terrific tofu

Divinely delicious and healthy By Christina Tay

excellent for making desserts such as vegetarian cakes and cookies. Toss silken tofu into a blender with fruits and you will have a refreshing tofu smoothie.

On the other hand, regular tofu ranges from soft to extra firm. Much firmer and drier than silken tofu, regular tofu is more resilient so it is suitable for deep frying or stir frying. Regular tofu is often used to make baked tofu that is pressed and marinated with condiments. Toss regular tofu into a piping-hot claypot with lots of sesame oil and oyster sauce and you will get an aromatic, wholesome dish.

Enjoy tofu on different occasions

To enjoy the health benefits of tofu, try eating it on different occasions. On a hot day, you may want to enjoy a refreshing cold dish made with yakko tofu and soya sauce with a sprinkle of grated ginger, chillies and chopped spring onions on top. Soft and smooth, yakko tofu certainly is at its best when served chilled. They are so good they practically slide down our throats.

Going for a BBQ? Try bringing some tau kwas along. With a meaty-texture, tau kwa tastes simply delectable when grilled or barbequed and stuffed with fresh crunchy vegetables. Nutrition-wise, tau kwa also scores more points as it contains more protein and calcium than other types of tofu.

So go on, eat tofu for better health. There is even a popular Chinese belief that expectant mothers who eat a lot of tofu during pregnancy will give birth to a baby with fair, soft and beautiful skin. So yes, eat tofu for beautiful babies too.

Nutrition information of silken tofu

Per serving of 100g

●Energy	44 kcal/185 kj
●Protein	5.3 g
●Total fat	1.9g
– Saturated fat	0.4g
– Trans fat	0 g
●Cholesterol	0 mg
●Carbohydrate	1.52g
●Dietary fibre	0.9g
●Sodium	0.3mg
●Calcium	65 mg

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