

Korean Mabu Tofu

No matter where I've lived, I've always explored and utilized local ethnic markets. In one such neighbourhood I found a Korean market and started to experiment with some indigenous Korean lettuces and mushrooms, fish cakes and bean and chili pastes, flavoured oils and flavoured soy sauces. Soft tofu's were a bit of a challenge, but I found a really nice way of doing it. This is no classic Mabu recipe. It is a fresh, spicy and textured experience. The smokey shitake fried in sesame oil are a chewy explosion. The soft tofu breaks up nicely in a sweet and spicy sauce. Pork, sesame and peppers sweeten the recipe. The black bean paste gives it a smokey depth and the chili paste fires it up well and good. Finding a good buckwheat pasta at an Oriental market is a must, or even try a yam pasta. You can totally replace the ground meat with a ground veggie meat substitute. It is still delicious and hearty enough to be a winter meal.

ground pork
soft tofu cut into cubes
8-10 fresh or reconstituted shitake mushrooms
1 cup veggie stock
2 tblsp black bean paste
1 tblsp hot red pepper paste
1 large onion, chopped
4 chopped green onions
2 cloves of minced garlic
4 tblsp minced ginger
1 tsp fresh cracked pepper
1 good pinch of salt
1 bell pepper cut into strips
1 stalk of celery, chopped
1 tblsp sesame oil
1 tsp chili sesame oil
fresh corriander to taste

In large frying pan sauté the meat, halfway through add garlic and half the ginger, black bean paste and hot pepper paste. Remove from pan. In same pan fry onions and celery until golden, add remaining ginger and salt. In separate sauce pan sauté shitake mushrooms in both sesame oils until semi crispy. Combine prepared ingredients with veggie stalk, salt and cracked pepper. Simmer on medium low for fifteen minutes. Add tofu, green onions, bell pepper and fresh corriander. Simmer on low for ten more minutes. Ready to serve .