



FOOD MATTERS

with Culinary Nutritionist Sue Radd

DEMYSTIFYING TOFU

It has been the poor man's staple in Asian cuisine for centuries, but in recent years tofu has become popular with Westerners seeking superfoods.

why tofu is good for you

Tofu is a terrific source of healthy, plant-based protein. It's also low in saturated fat and depending on the variety, it can provide a good source of iron and calcium.

But the greatest interest in tofu comes from research showing that it and many other soy foods, if consumed regularly and from an early age, can provide significant protection against many killer diseases, such as heart disease, stroke, cancer and osteoporosis. Studies also reveal that it can even help in dealing with menopausal symptoms.

Tofu also takes on the flavour of any seasoning and it's inexpensive!

different types

All types of tofu are made from soybeans, water and a setting agent. The difference has to do with the amount of moisture in the final product, which determines its texture and nutritional content.

- ▶ **Classic or regular** is the most common type. It has the consistency of firmly set custard.
- ▶ **Silken** is smooth and delicate, has a

texture similar to pudding and contains the highest moisture content.

- ▶ **Firm** is pressed for a longer period to remove more water, making it firmer, chewier and meatier in texture.

how to use it

Which tofu you choose depends on your purpose.

- ▶ **Classic** is ideal to steam and enjoy drizzled with soy sauce, mashed to make a scrambled egg alternative or crumbled and used in chilli dishes and tacos.
- ▶ **Silken** is perfect cubed and added to soups, to replace eggs and/or cream in baking, or pureed as a base for sauces, dressings or mousse.
- ▶ **Firm**, being the most robust, can be cut into various shapes, then pan-fried, stir-fried, skewered, marinated and grilled or made into a dairy-free version of ricotta.

The best way to store leftover tofu is to cover it with water in a container and refrigerate. It will store for up to a week if the water is changed daily.

Nutritionist Sue Radd is the award-winning author of *The Breakfast Book* and co-author of *Eat To Live*, internationally acclaimed for showing how savvy eating can combat cancer and heart disease and improve well-being. See www.sueradd.com for more nutrition information or follow her on Twitter @CulinaryMed.

