

Spicy Peanut Stew With Ginger and Tomato

By Julia Moskin

YIELD 8 servings

TIME 1 hour

Hearty stews needn't be meat-laden. Case in point: this rich, vibrantly-spiced vegan stew of eggplant, tomatoes, zucchini and peanut butter that is seasoned with North African spices like cumin, coriander, turmeric and cayenne. Fresh ginger and jalapeño add a little kick.

INGREDIENTS

1 medium-size eggplant, peeled and cut into 1/2-inch dice
1 teaspoon salt, more to taste
1 teaspoon ground cumin
1 teaspoon ground coriander
¼ teaspoon turmeric
⅛ teaspoon cayenne
¼ cup peanut oil
2 shallots, thinly sliced
2 inches fresh ginger, peeled and minced
1 to 2 jalapeño chilies, seeded and minced
1 onion, chopped
⅓ cup tomato paste
1 small (14.5 ounce) can diced tomatoes, preferably roasted
4 cups vegetable stock or water
½ cup natural unsweetened peanut butter (creamy or chunky)
1 medium-size zucchini, 6 to 8 ounces, cut in quarters lengthwise, then sliced 1/2 -inch thick
2 tablespoons freshly squeezed lemon juice (1 to 2 lemons)
⅓ cup coarsely chopped cilantro leaves, plus whole leaves for garnish

PREPARATION

Step 1

In a colander, toss eggplant with 1 teaspoon salt; set aside for 30 minutes. Rinse, drain well and set aside. In a small bowl, combine cumin, coriander, turmeric and cayenne; set aside.

Step 2

In a large pot, heat 3 tablespoons oil over medium-high heat. Add shallots and fry, stirring often, until soft, crisp and caramelized, about 10 minutes. Using a slotted spoon, transfer shallots to a large bowl, leaving oil in pot. Raise heat to high and add eggplant. Cook, stirring often, until lightly browned and just tender, about 10 minutes. Transfer to bowl with shallots.

Step 3

Add remaining 1 tablespoon oil to pot and heat over medium-high heat. Add ginger and chilies and cook, stirring for 30 seconds. Add spices and cook, stirring, 30 seconds more. Add onion and cook, stirring to scrape up any browned bits, until softened and translucent, about 5 minutes. Add tomato paste and cook, stirring, 1 minute.

Step 4

Add diced tomatoes, stock or water, eggplant, shallots and a sprinkling of salt. Bring to a boil and cook 5 minutes. Place peanut butter in a medium bowl, add one or two ladlefuls of hot soup, and stir until emulsified, then pour mixture back into soup.

Step 5

Reduce heat to a simmer, add zucchini, cover and cook 10 to 15 minutes, until vegetables are tender. Turn off heat and stir in lemon juice and chopped cilantro. Let cool slightly and taste; add salt if necessary. Serve in bowls with rice, garnished with cilantro leaves and chopped peanuts, if desired.

Cooked rice, for serving

Chopped roasted salted peanuts, for garnish (optional)

PRIVATE NOTES

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