

Nutty Coconut Noodles

Swick

Serves 4 to 6 | Active Time: 40 minutes | Total Time: 1 hour

Step 1: Making the Sauce

- 1 can full-fat coconut milk
- 1/2 cup peanut (or almond) butter
- 1/4 cup soy sauce
- 1 tbsp Garlic-Ginger Paste*
- 1 lime, juiced
- 1 tbsp hot sauce, such as sambal oelek

To start the sauce, simply place all of the ingredients into a small pot and heat over medium-low heat. If you don't have any Garlic-Ginger Paste, use a teaspoon or so of finely minced garlic and ginger instead.

Let the sauce gently simmer for 15 to 20 minutes.

Lastly, taste for seasoning, adjust the seasoning and/or spice level to suit your tastes.

Step 2: Marinating & Cooking the Tofu

- 1 - 350 gr pkg extra firm tofu
- 1 tbsp olive oil, optional
- 1 tbsp Garlic-Ginger Paste*
- 1 tbsp soy sauce
- 1 tsp curry powder
- 1/2 tsp turmeric powder
- sea salt
- freshly ground pepper

To start, 400°F (200°C). To prepare the tofu, simply break the tofu up using your fingers, or dice into smaller pieces.

Next, coat the tofu in a bit of oil (if using), and then add the paste and spices and toss to combine. *Again, if you don't have any Garlic-Ginger Paste, using a teaspoon or so of finely minced garlic and ginger.

At this point, it is best to marinate the tofu for at least 30 minutes or so (or even overnight) but if you are short on time it can be baked immediately. It can also be fried instead.

Bake the tofu for 10 to 15 minutes, or until it has heated through and started to brown. Gently toss the tofu once during cooking to ensure even coloring.

Step 3: Cooking the Noodles

- 2 tsp sesame oil

As far as the noodles go, a variety of noodles would work for this recipe. We just like the brown rice noodles as it keeps this dish gluten-free while still being delicious and a bit more nutritious.

Cook the noodles according to the package. Depending on the brand the noodle itself, in many cases the noodles are soaked warm water for about 30 minutes or until they turn soft. Next, drain the noodles in a colander. Once most of the excess water has been drained, add a couple of teaspoons of sesame oil to prevent the noodles from sticking together.

Set the noodles aside while you prepare the rest of the ingredients.

Step 4: Preparing Your Mise en Place

- 1 sm. red onion, sliced
- 1 cup sliced mushrooms
- 1 sm. red pepper, sliced
- 1 cup sliced carrots, blanched
- 1 cup sm broccoli florets, blanched
- 1 cup sliced green beans, blanched
- 1 tbsp extra-virgin olive oil
- sea salt, to taste
- freshly ground black pepper, to taste

*In terms of the vegetables, almost any combination of vegetables can be used here and they can be cut however you like. We tend to think about the rainbow when deciding which vegetables to use and also their textures. We also like to cut them all a bit different to add texture and variety as well. Check out the images above to see how they were all cut.

Blanch all the vegetables ingredients listed in the ingredients for this task for use in assembling, then move onto the pan work below.

To cook the vegetables, heat a large fry pan using water test (if using a stainless steel pan), then reduce to medium heat. Then add the oil, followed by the onions. Let the onions cook for a minute or so and then add the mushrooms, season with a bit of salt and pepper.

Once the mushrooms have lost most of their moisture and have started to brown a bit, add the red peppers and continue to cook for another couple of minutes. For this salad, you are looking for the vegetables to still have a bit of crunch to them, so under-cooking is better than overcooking here.

Step 5: Assembling & Finishing the Dish

- 1/3 cup toasted nuts, such as peanuts, roughly chopped
- 1/2 to 1 bunch cilantro, roughly chopped
- 1 jalapeño, minced, optional

Once the vegetables and sauce are ready, it's just a matter of tossing everything together. Note that up until this stage, everything can be prepared ahead of time.

To assemble the salad, start by adding the vegetables (both pan fried vegetables and blanched) to the noodles and gently toss them to combine. Next, add some of the sauce and other ingredients and gently toss again.

When adding the sauce, be sure you don't overdress the noodles by using too much sauce. It's best to add a bit, toss, taste and see if you need to add more. If desired, you can even serve some of the sauce on the side.

When plating the salad, note that many of the vegetables will fall to the bottom of the mixing bowl — don't worry. We line up the bowls and add mostly noodles to each dish and then we go back with small handfuls of the vegetables at the bottom of the mixing bowl and add them to the top of each plate. Lastly, top each plate with a bit of garnish.

Once the salad is ready, serve immediately. Any leftovers will keep in the refrigerator but this salad is at its best when first made.