

# Indian Butter Tofu | Makhani Tofu

Swick

Serves 4 | Active Time: 45 minutes | Total Time: 1 hour 30 minutes

## Step 1: Preparing & Marinating the Tofu

- 1 - 350 gr pkg firm tofu\*
- 1 tbsp Garlic-Ginger Paste
- 1/2 to 1 tsp Kashmiri chili powder\*
- 1 tsp fenugreek leaves (kasoori methi)
- 1/2 tsp paprika
- 1/2 tsp garam masala
- 1/2 tsp gr cumin
- 1/2 tsp gr coriander
- 1/2 tsp dried mango powder (amchur)
- pinch of cinnamon
- pinch of gr clove
- pinch of gr nutmeg
- 1/2 tsp sea salt

Note: The number of spices may seem long but they do add nice depth to the tofu once cooked. With that said, if you are missing a few things the tofu is still delicious with just the first 3 spices as well as the Garlic-Ginger Paste. If you don't have the paste, use a 1/2 tablespoon of minced garlic and ginger instead.

Note: If you do not have Kashmiri powder, substituted with 3/4 tsp paprika + 1/4 tsp cayenne (or to taste). The amount of heat depends on personal preference.

## Step 2: Gathering & Preparing Your Remaining Mise en Place

- 2 tbsp Garlic-Ginger Paste
- 1 - 15 oz can whole tomatoes can (or 4 lrg tomatoes, diced)\*
- 2 tbsp tomato paste
- 1 red onion, diced
- 6 green cardamom pods
- 2 black cardamom pod
- 1 sm cinnamon stick (or 1/4 tsp ground)
- 3 whole cloves
- 1/2 tsp fenugreek seeds
- 1/2 tsp garam masala
- 1/2 to 1 tsp Kashmiri powder

For your mise en place, again, if you don't have the Garlic-Ginger Paste you can use a tablespoon of minced garlic and ginger instead.

Note: For the tomatoes, we typically use canned; however, fresh tomatoes also work really well.

To prepare the tomatoes for the sauce, simply chop them up a bit with some scissors, or add pulse them a few times in a blender.

Again, the spices might seem like a lot but they really do add nice depth to the final dish. And again, the amount of heat (Kashmiri powder) depends on personal preference. The amounts listed here range from mildly-hot to medium-hot.

### Step 3: Cooking & Preparing the Sauce

- 1 tbsp oil
- 1 tbsp non-dairy butter
- salt, to taste
- 1/3 cup raw cashews

To cook the dish, heat a large sauté pan over medium heat. Once hot, add the oil and butter, followed by the onions and the whole spices (cardamom pods, cinnamon stick, cloves, and fenugreek seeds) a good pinch of salt.

Let the onions and whole spices cook for approx 30 to 40 minutes, or until they have almost melted and become golden in color. Stirring regularly to ensure the onions do not stick and/or burn.

Next, add the dried spices and let cook for a few seconds and then add the Garlic-Ginger Paste and let cook for another 30 seconds or so then add the tomato paste and let cook for another 30 seconds. Lastly, add the tomatoes and cashews and stir to combine the ingredients.

Let this mixture cook for approximately 45 minutes, or until almost all of the moisture has evaporated from the tomatoes. Adjust the heat so that the mixture is just simmering, stirring regularly to prevent the sauce from burning and also from splattering everywhere. You might find it helpful to place a lid slightly ajar over the pan.

Cooking the tomatoes down like this adds a nice rich sweetness to the final sauce.

Once the tomatoes have cooked down strain them through a tamis or fine-mesh sieve to remove the spices. Straining the sauce also ensures a nice smooth sauce, which is classic with this dish.

Note: A tamis is a basically a round flat strainer or food mill that just makes it easier to push the sauce through. It can also be used for many other things as well. Alternatively, the sauce can simply be puréed in a blender until smooth. Note that the bigger spices (like the cinnamon stick and black cardamom pods) should be removed before puréeing.

Once the sauce is close to being done you can go ahead and either pan-fry or bake the tofu.

### Step 4: Cooking the Tofu

- 1 tbsp oil

To cook the tofu, it can either be pan-fried or baked. The benefit of pan-frying it is that you can get some nice darker bits on the outside without overcooking it. That being said, either way, works.

To pan-fry the tofu, heat a large frypan over medium-high to high heat. Once hot, add the oil, followed by the tofu. For the best color, allow the tofu to cook on the first side for a few minutes without touching it. Then gently toss or flip the pieces and let cook for a few minutes on the other side. Once the tofu is nicely browned, remove from the heat.

Once you are ready to serve (or close to) the tofu is added to the strained sauce and heated through. With that said, the tofu is fine if you need to prepare it a bit ahead of time as it will get reheated in the sauce later.

## Step 5: Finishing & Serving the Dish

- 2 tbsp non-dairy butter
- 1 tsp fenugreek leaves (kasoori methi)
- 1 tsp malt vinegar
- 1 tsp garam masala
- 1/4 to 1/2 cup Cashew Cream

To finish the dish, add the puréed sauce back to the sauté pan and then add the reserved tofu and gently fold it into the sauce.

Next, add the non-dairy butter, fenugreek leaves, malt vinegar, and garam masala. Depending on the tomatoes used and how thick the sauce has cooked and thickened, you may need to add 1/2 to 1 cup of water to thin the sauce out a bit. If need, you can also add a bit more Cashew Cream until you reach the desired color and flavor. This will ultimately depend on your idea of what a “Buttered Chix/Tofu” dish looks like to you. With that said, you can also add more cashews at the beginning next time.

Lastly, taste for seasoning and then let the sauce simmer for a few minutes, or until everything is heated through.

Serve immediately with basmati rice, pappadums, and your favorite sides.

## Chef's Notes

Cooking the Onions for a Great Curry:

1. How you start the curry matters. Most good curries, start by slow-cooking a good amount of onions. The onions are the foundation of a good curry as they add depth, flavor, and texture to the curry. Without this base layer, the curry will taste one weak and almost shallow.
2. The type of onion also matters. Unless otherwise specified, just basic yellow onions in the recipe as they have the lowest moisture content when compared to onions like Maui, Walla Walla or Vidalia onions.

The lower moisture content the quicker and more evenly the onions will cook and brown. The higher the moisture content, the longer it takes for the moisture to evaporate, which means it will take longer for the caramelization to start.

3. Salt the onions — the salt will also help to speed up the caramelization process as it helps to draw the moisture from the onions. If you are on a salt-restricted diet, note that the caramelizing of the onions will just take longer.