

joy luck SUPPER

Warm up a winter night with a feast that puts good times and good fortune on the menu

Kung hei fat choi! "Luck and prosperity!" is the customary greeting during Chinese New Year, a celebration that lasts from the new moon, or lunar new year, to the Lantern Festival 15 days later. Food and feasting play a huge part in the festivities, with each item on the table symbolizing a wish for the coming year. We've put together a menu that brings you the best of New Year's luck: long sesame noodles for long life, bok choy for wealth and riches, tofu and black beans for strength and health, and mashed sweet potatoes for good fortune. Set out a bowl of chewy ginger candy to summon peace and harmony for everyone around the table, and the Year of the Pig will be off to a sweet start.

menu

Baby Bok Choy with Chinese Mushrooms
Crispy Five-Spice Tofu with Black Bean Relish
Mashed Sweet Potatoes with Goji Berries
Sesame Noodles with Napa Cabbage

CRISPY FIVE-SPICE TOFU WITH BLACK BEAN RELISH

Serves 4 • Vegan

Five-spice powder, a blend of fennel, anise, cinnamon, cloves and ginger, gives this dish its signature flavor.

- 16 oz. extra-firm tofu, drained**
- 2 Tbs. roasted sesame oil, divided**
- 3 Tbs. fermented black beans, rinsed and chopped**
- 3 cloves garlic, minced (about 1 Tbs.)**
- 1 Tbs. minced fresh ginger**
- 2 Tbs. dry sherry or mirin (rice wine)**
- 1 Tbs. low-sodium soy sauce**
- 1 Tbs. maple syrup**
- 1 tsp. rice or cider vinegar**
- ¼ cup plus ½ tsp. cornstarch, divided**
- 2 green onions, sliced (about ¼ cup)**
- 1 Tbs. five-spice powder**

1. Place tofu on plate, and set second plate on top. Weight with heavy can, and drain 30 minutes.
2. Heat 1 Tbs. oil in skillet over medium heat. Add black beans, garlic and ginger, and sauté 1 minute. Stir in sherry, soy sauce, maple syrup and vinegar, and cook 1 minute. Mix ½ tsp. cornstarch with ½ cup water in bowl. Add to bean mixture, and cook 1 minute, or until thickened, stirring constantly. Fold in green onions, and transfer to bowl.
3. Slice tofu into thirds widthwise. Cut each slice into 4 triangles. Combine cornstarch and five-spice powder on large plate.
4. Heat remaining 1 Tbs. oil in skillet over medium-high heat. Dredge tofu triangles in cornstarch mixture. Cook 3 minutes on each side, or until browned and crispy. Transfer to serving plate, and drizzle with black bean sauce. Serve with steamed rice, if desired.

PER SERVING: 224 CAL; 10G PROT; 12G TOTAL FAT (1G SAT. FAT); 18G CARB; 0MG CHOL; 156MG SOD; 1G FIBER; 3G SUGARS



To reheat steamed rice without overcooking it, place in a strainer or colander over a saucepan filled with 1 inch of water. Bring water to a boil, and let steam from the boiling water warm the rice 3 to 5 minutes, or until hot.

BABY BOK CHOY WITH CHINESE MUSHROOMS

Serves 4 • Vegan

Chinese black mushrooms, or dried shiitakes, have an intense, slightly smoky flavor that's especially good in soups and stir-fries. Rinse well before soaking to remove any grit.

- 8 dried Chinese black mushrooms**
- 1 cup low-sodium vegetable broth**
- 1 tsp. low-sodium soy sauce**
- 1 Tbs. canola oil**
- 1 lb. baby bok choy (about 4 bunches), halved**
- 1 clove garlic, minced (about 1 tsp.)**
- 1 tsp. sugar**
- 1 medium red bell pepper, cut into 1-inch dice (about 1 cup)**

1. Combine mushrooms and broth in pot, and bring to a boil. Remove from heat, and soak 30 minutes to soften. Drain, reserving soaking liquid. Add soy sauce to soaking liquid, and set aside.
2. Remove and discard mushroom stems. Cut caps into ¼-inch slices.
3. Heat oil in large skillet over medium-high heat. Add bok choy, cut side down, and cook 1 minute. Add reserved mushroom liquid, mushrooms, garlic and sugar, and cover. Simmer 5 minutes. Sprinkle bell pepper on top, and cook 5 minutes more, or until bok choy and peppers are tender. Remove lid, increase heat to high, and cook 2 to 3 minutes more, or until all liquid has evaporated. Serve hot.

PER SERVING: 83 CAL; 3G PROT; 4G TOTAL FAT (0.5G SAT. FAT); 12G CARB; 0MG CHOL; 216MG SOD; 3G FIBER; 4G SUGARS

MASHED SWEET POTATOES WITH GOJI BERRIES

Serves 4 • Vegan

Goji berries, also known as wolfberries, are a traditional addition to soups and stews (for more info, see p. 77). They're nicknamed "happy berries" because of the sense of well-being they induce, according to Chinese medicine. When plumped in hot water and stirred into this dish, goji berries have a taste and texture similar to raisins.

- 1 cup walnuts**
- 3 Tbs. sugar**
- 2 large sweet potatoes, peeled and sliced (about 1 lb.)**
- ¼ cup goji berries or raisins**
- 2 Tbs. roasted sesame or canola oil**
- 2 Tbs. maple syrup**
- 1 Tbs. fresh ginger, minced**

1. Toast walnuts in skillet over medium-high heat 5 minutes, or until fragrant. Transfer to cutting board, and chop. Add sugar and 2 Tbs. water to skillet. Cook over medium-high heat 1 minute; add walnuts, and cook 5 minutes, or until sugar sticks to walnuts and walnuts are golden brown, stirring constantly. Remove from heat, and cool.
2. Cook sweet potatoes in boiling salted water 10 minutes, or until soft. Drain, reserving ¼ cup cooking water. Transfer to bowl, and mash with reserved liquid. Season with salt and pepper.
3. Place goji berries in small bowl, and cover with hot water. Let stand 5 minutes to plump. Drain liquid.
4. Heat oil with maple syrup and ginger in small skillet over medium low 2 minutes, or until fragrant. Add to potatoes, and fold in goji berries. Season with salt and pepper. Serve sprinkled with walnuts.

PER SERVING: 288 CAL; 4G PROT; 17G TOTAL FAT (2G SAT. FAT); 33G CARB; 0MG CHOL; 389MG SOD; 3G FIBER; 20G SUGARS

SESAME NOODLES WITH NAPA CABBAGE

Serves 4 • Vegan
30 minutes or fewer

This easy dish is equally good hot or cold, and leftovers make a great take-along lunch.

- 3 Tbs. reduced-fat peanut butter
- 2 Tbs. roasted sesame oil
- 2 Tbs. low-sodium soy sauce
- 2 Tbs. sherry or mirin (rice wine)
- 1 Tbs. rice vinegar
- 1 Tbs. sugar
- ¼ tsp. red pepper flakes or ½ tsp. chile sauce
- 10 oz. long noodles, such as udon or spaghetti
- ½ lb. napa cabbage, shredded (about 4 cups)
- ¼ cup chopped cilantro

1. Whisk together peanut butter, sesame oil, soy sauce, sherry, vinegar, sugar and red pepper flakes in saucepan.
2. Cook noodles according to package directions.
3. Meanwhile, place cabbage in colander over sink. Warm sauce over medium-low heat.
4. Drain noodles over cabbage in colander to wilt cabbage. Transfer noodles and cabbage to serving bowl, add sauce, and toss until combined.
5. Sprinkle with cilantro, and serve.

PER SERVING: 408 CAL; 15G PROT; 13G TOTAL FAT (2G SAT. FAT); 59G CARB; 0MG CHOL; 553MG SOD; 5G FIBER; 7G SUGARS

In February, Myra Kornfeld can be seen shopping in New York's Chinatown wearing a bright red winter jacket (for luck). She teaches ethnic cooking classes at the Natural Gourmet Institute for Health & Culinary Arts. »

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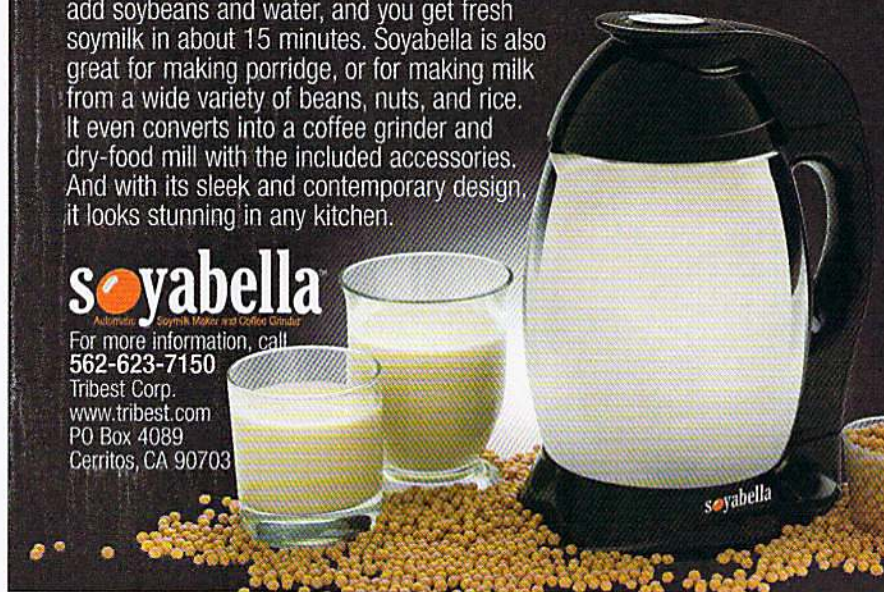
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