

Spicy Gochujang Tofu (Korean Inspired)

Prep: 20 minutes • Cook: 35 minutes

Crispy-edged tofu tossed in a glossy, sweet-heat gochujang sauce layered with umami, garlic, and toasted sesame. Vibrant, punchy, and deeply satisfying over steamed rice with fresh greens.

Ingredients

- 1 block firm or extra-firm tofu
- 1 tablespoon olive oil or other neutral oil
- 2 tablespoons cornstarch (or potato starch)
- pinch salt
- pinch black pepper
- 3 tablespoons gochujang
- 2 tablespoons ketchup
- 1 tablespoon mirin
- 1-2 tablespoons soy sauce (divided, to taste)
- 1 tablespoon brown sugar
- 4 cloves garlic (minced)
- 1 tablespoon rice vinegar
- 2 teaspoons toasted sesame oil
- 2-4 tablespoons water (as needed)
- 2 scallions (thinly sliced)
- to taste sesame seeds (toasted)

Instructions

1. Press the tofu for at least 15 minutes to remove excess moisture.
2. Cut the pressed tofu into 1-inch cubes or tear into bite-sized pieces and place in a bowl.
3. Drizzle with oil, season with a pinch of salt and black pepper, and gently toss to coat.
4. Sprinkle cornstarch (or potato starch) over the tofu and gently toss again to coat evenly.
5. Oven method: Preheat oven to 425°F. Arrange tofu on a lined baking sheet in a single layer. Bake 15 minutes, toss, then bake 15–20 minutes more until golden and crispy.
6. Air fryer alternative: Air fry at 400°F for 18–20 minutes, shaking the basket periodically until crispy.
7. Make the sauce: In a small saucepan combine gochujang, ketchup, mirin, soy sauce, brown sugar, minced garlic, rice vinegar, toasted sesame oil, and 2–4 tablespoons water (as needed). Bring to a simmer over medium-high heat, then reduce to low and cook a few minutes to meld flavors and slightly thicken, adding water to thin to desired consistency.

8. Add the crispy tofu to the saucepan and toss until evenly coated in the sauce.
9. Garnish with sliced scallions and toasted sesame seeds. Serve hot, ideally with steamed rice and vegetables.

Tags: Tofu, Korean, Spicy, Vegan, Weeknight Friendly, Air Fryer

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