



Great Greek Tasty-Tofu Gyros

By Dylan Sabuco

Prep Time 10 / **Cook Time** 20 / **Serves** 4 - 6

Fun-Da-Mentals Kitchen Skills

bake: to cook food with dry heat, as in an oven.

measure: to calculate the specific amount of an ingredient required using a measuring tool (like measuring cups or spoons).

sauté: to cook or brown food in a pan containing a small quantity of butter, oil, or other fat.

season: to add flavor to food with spices, herbs, and salt.

slice: to cut into thin pieces using a sawing motion with your knife.

knife skills: Bear Claw (growl), Pinch, Plank, and Bridge (look out for trolls).

Equipment

- Oven
- Large sauté pan or skillet
- Baking sheet
- Parchment paper
- Cutting board + kid-safe knife
- Large mixing bowl
- Liquid measuring cup
- Measuring spoons
- Wooden spoon

Ingredients

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- 1 pkg extra firm tofu **** (for SOY ALLERGY sub 2 to 4 portobello mushrooms)****
- 1 tsp curry powder
- 1 tsp cumin
- 1 tsp Italian seasoning
- 1 tsp salt
- 1/2 tsp ground black pepper
- 1 vegetable bouillon cube
- 2 T water
- 2 tsp vegetable oil ******
- 6 small pita bread **** (for GLUTEN ALLERGY sub gluten-free/nut-free pita bread)****
- Optional topping ingredients:
 - 1 tomato
 - 1 red onion
 - 1 C chopped romaine lettuce
 - 1/2 C feta cheese **** (for DAIRY ALLERGY sub 1/4 C nutritional yeast)****
 - 1/2 C Kalamata olives, pitted
 - 1 cucumber, chopped
 - 1 small handful of mint, chopped

Food Allergen Substitutions

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Soy: For 1 pkg extra firm tofu, substitute 2 to 4 portobello mushrooms. Substitute canola oil or other nut-free high-smoking point oil for vegetable oil, which usually contains soy.

Gluten/Wheat: Substitute gluten-free/nut-free pita bread.

Dairy: For optional 1/2 C feta cheese topping, substitute 1/4 C nutritional yeast.

Instructions

Great Greek Tasty-Tofu Gyros

intro

"Γεια σας" (YAH sahs) or "Hello" in Greek! Gyros (YEE-ros) is a handheld Greek dish that combines stacks of slowly spit-roasted pork, lamb, or beef with creamy Greek yogurt, sour feta, and tons of refreshing vegetables. The result is an ultimate street food that is popular not only in Greece but all over the world. Our Sticky Fingers Cooking version assumes you don't have a spit for slow roasting, so we will use our stovetops. Also, save the meat for another meal because this gyro will be made with tofu. By the end, you and your family will be scratching your heads, saying, "Is that really tofu?"

slice + season + count

First, open your tofu and drain as much liquid as possible. Then, slice the tofu into long, rough pieces. Toss the sliced tofu into a large mixing bowl. In a liquid measuring cup, measure **1 teaspoon curry powder, 1 teaspoon cumin, 1 teaspoon Italian seasoning, 1 teaspoon salt, 1/2 teaspoon black pepper, 1 vegetable bouillon cube, 2 tablespoons water**, and **2 teaspoons vegetable oil**. Mix the seasonings thoroughly before pouring the mixture over the tofu. Count to five in Greek while mixing: 1 ένα (eh-nah), 2 δύο (thee-ow), 3 τρία (tree-ah), 4 τέσσερα (tes-seh-rah), 5 πέντε (pen-de).

recipe note

When mixing the tofu and seasoning mixture, don't worry about breaking the tofu into small pieces. The "gyros meat" will be super tasty whether you have big or small pieces. Also, be sure to regulate how much liquid is in your mixture. Drain the tofu as much as possible using paper towels if necessary. If the mixture is still wet after cooking for the full cooking time, increase the heat during the final 5 minutes of cooking time.

preheat + sauté + bake

Preheat the oven to 375 F. While the oven preheats, place a large sauté pan on medium high heat. Pour the tofu into the pan and spread it as thinly as possible. Cook the tofu "gyro meat" for 10 minutes, stirring as often as you like. After 10 minutes of cooking, transfer the tofu to a parchment paper lined baking sheet. Place the baking sheet in the oven for 10 minutes.

chop + stuff + munch

While the tofu "gyro meat" is baking, chop all your chosen topping ingredients. Also, pita bread is always more tasty after you toast it. Take a minute to toast or microwave your pita bread to warm it up. Test your tofu for doneness. It should have absorbed all the ingredients and be slightly crisp on the edges. When the tofu and the toppings are ready, stuff heaping scoops of everything into your pita pocket. It might be messy, but it sure is a tasty Mediterranean snack!

"Kalí órexi" or "Enjoy" in Greek with Fabulous Feta Tzatziki (see recipe) and extra napkins!

Featured Ingredient: Tofu!

Hi! I'm Tofu!

"I'm also called "bean curd" because Tofu (TOH-foo) is made from soybeans. I'm a great substitute for meat and eggs in many recipes, while my spongy texture absorbs the flavors of a dish's marinade, sauce, or seasoning!"

History & Etymology

Sources disagree on when the making of tofu began. Some say it was discovered about 2,000 years ago in China during the Han dynasty, and some say it was closer to 1,000 years ago. Legend says that Prince Liu An found the process for making tofu during the Han dynasty. Whether he did or the invention was just attributed to him, the Han dynasty tofu may not have resembled what we have now.

Another theory for tofu's discovery is ascribed to the addition of impure sea salt to a boiled soybean mixture that caused the concoction to curdle. Some also believe the credit goes to borrowed milk-curdling techniques from the Mongolians or East Indians.

Zen Buddhist monks introduced "Chinese tofu" to Japan in the late 8th century, where it was used as a replacement for meat and fish. Chinese immigrants brought tofu to Southeast Asia sometime between the 10th and 11th centuries.

In the United States, tofu was first mentioned by Benjamin Franklin in letters written to two different people. He had tried it in London and referred to it as Chinese "cheese" made from soybeans.

The first tofu factory in the United States was established in 1878. The oldest currently running tofu company is Ota Tofu in Portland, Oregon, founded in 1911.

The word "tofu" comes from the Japanese "tōfu," from the Chinese "dòufu," from "dòu" ("beans") and fǔ ("rot").

How to Select & Eat

The types of tofu you can buy are silken or soft, medium (regular or medium-firm), firm, and extra firm. Silken or soft tofu has not been pressed and has a higher moisture content than firmer tofu. It is similar to yogurt or pudding or a soft, early cheese. You can use it to make smoothies or as a replacement for eggs. Medium tofu is a popular type, referred to as just "tofu" on some labels. It has a porous texture that is good for mopping up sauces.

Firm tofu has been drained and pressed but still has a high moisture content. Its outside texture is similar to raw meat, and when you press it, it will bounce back. The inside is similar to a firm custard. Firm tofu is versatile to cook and can be pan-fried, deep-fried, or stir-fried.

Extra-firm tofu has had a larger amount of liquid pressed out, and its texture is closer to fully-cooked meat. Therefore, it is a suitable replacement for meat and can be pan-fried, deep-fried, or stir-fried. You can also serve it cold or add it to soup. Extra-firm tofu does not absorb liquid as well as firm tofu, so if you use a marinade, choose medium or firm tofu.

Tofu benefits from being frozen before cooking. Freezing tofu removes more of the liquid and gives it a stronger, firmer, and more meat-like texture. When you cook with frozen tofu, it will not fall apart as easily.

Freezing also helps tofu to last longer, and it works with most forms but may be more difficult with the silken type.

To freeze tofu, drain the liquid from the package, then remove the block and gently squeeze out any remaining liquid with a paper or kitchen towel (you do not need to press it). Cut it into the size needed for your recipe. If you will be using a portion of a tofu block, separate what you are using, then put the pieces, not touching, on a tray covered with plastic wrap. After the tofu freezes, in about five hours or overnight, you can transfer it to a freezer-safe airtight container or bag. Frozen tofu may not need to be thawed before cooking, depending on your recipe. If you want to thaw it first, let it sit in the refrigerator for a few hours or overnight, or if needed more quickly, run warm water over it.

Nutrition

Tofu is high in protein, which makes it a great meat substitute. Firm tofu has more protein than silken or soft tofu. It also has a higher fat content.

Tofu is considered a complete protein, containing all nine essential amino acids.

Tofu has a good amount of calcium, iron, potassium, and manganese. It can help strengthen bones, lower cholesterol, and prevent coronary heart disease.

People allergic to soy should not consume tofu, which is made from soybeans.