

Veggie Delight Breakfast Bowl - Recipe

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Ingredients (1 serving.)

- 5 oz. extra firm tofu block drained and diced.
- 1/3 cup pre-cooked "jasmine" whole-grain brown rice.
- 1/4 cup pre-cooked chopped spinach.
- 1/4 cup of diced yam and/or sweet potato.
- 1/8 cup of diced pasilla, poblano, anaheim, or jalapeño chili pepper.
- 1/4 teaspoon chili powder or other low or non-sodium (salt) seasoning.
- 1/8 teaspoon powdered red pepper (cayenne) or other low or non-sodium (salt) seasoning.
- 1/2 diced small (Hass) avocado.
- 5-7 (based on size) cherry or grape tomatoes.

Equipment

- Microwave oven. Used for speed, easy clean up, and to avoid frying.
- Medium size (deep & 6-8" diameter) microwave-safe bowl.
- Microwave-safe cover. (I use a plate.)
- Heat protection pads or gloves.
- Medium size kitchen knife.

Preparation

- Tofu usually comes in 14-16 oz. blocks packaged in a tub filled with water. Using a knife, cut an opening in the plastic covering along one side of the tub and discard the water.
- Completely remove the plastic cover. Cut the tofu block into thirds so that you end up with three pieces. Place one of the pieces into a medium size (6-8") microwave-safe bowl. Put the remaining tofu into a storage container, cover with filtered or spring water, and place in a refrigerator. To keep the tofu fresh, change the water every day or as you use it -- like I do. Dice the tofu by slicing it into 3-4 strips across the top. Turn it on its side and do the same. Then slice it in the other direction across the strips so that you end up with a bunch of 1/2" – 1/4" cubes.
- Add 1/4 cup of diced yam and/or sweet potato.
- Add 1/8 cup of diced pasilla, poblano, anaheim, or jalapeño chili pepper. **IMPORTANT:** Be sure to remove the seeds and membranes before dicing as these are very hot.
- Mix the yam, chili pepper, and tofu.
- Cover the bowl with a microwave-safe cover (or plate) and cook it on high for 2 1/2 minutes.
- Using heat protection pads, remove the bowl from the microwave.
- Push the cover slightly to one side of the bowl to create a tiny opening. Using heat protection pads, firmly grasp the bowl and cover, and then carefully rotate it toward the opening until the water from the tofu begins to drain. Shake up & down to encourage thorough draining. Reverse the process by creating an opening on the opposite side and then drain again. This procedure works best with a plate.

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- Add 1/3 cup of pre-cooked "jasmine" whole-grain brown rice.
- Add 1/4 cup of pre-cooked chopped spinach.
- Mix ingredients thoroughly.
- Cover the bowl and microwave on high for 1 1/2 minutes.
- Drain in the same manner described above. Little or no liquid should drain out.
- Add 1/4 teaspoon chili powder or other low or non-sodium (salt) seasoning.
- Add 1/8 teaspoon powdered red pepper (cayenne) or other low or non-sodium (salt) seasoning.
- Mix in seasonings.
- Add 1/2 diced small avocado on top.
- Add 5-7 (based on size) cherry or grape tomatoes on top.

Details

You don't have to measure each ingredient exactly or include every item. If there are ingredients that you like or don't like, increase, reduce, or eliminate them. However, I encourage you to NOT remove ingredients simply because you've never eaten this particular combination of foods before. Be bold! Try it!

Draining is necessary due to the high water content in tofu. There is also some water in spinach. Although it's a bit of a hassle, draining it well makes the recipe much better by not being watery.

For expediency, I make a 5-7 day supply of brown rice and chopped spinach in advance. Doing it in the way that I will explain takes very little effort.

I buy 32 oz. bags of uncooked "jasmine" whole-grain brown rice from Fresh & Easy. To keep it fresh, I only cook one cup at time in a rice cooker. It takes about 35-40 minutes and it makes 2 1/4 cups of cooked rice. My rice cooker automatically switches from the cooking mode to the warming mode when it's done. To allow for the additional cooking that I'll be doing later when I prepare this recipe, I put the rice into a storage container and place it in the refrigerator the second it's done.

I used to buy frozen precooked brown rice from Trader's Joe's for these recipes until I discovered Fresh & Easy's "jasmine" brown rice. It tastes better and it's much less expensive. To me it smells like freshly cooked buttered popcorn, especially when it's cold.

I buy 16 oz. bags of frozen chopped spinach from Trader Joe's, but this type of product is available at most stores. I like the Trader Joes brand because it easily mixes in my recipe and it's pesticide free. I cook 1/3 of the bag in a microwave for 1 minute less than what the instructions say to allow for the additional cooking I'll be doing when I make this recipe.

Once I add the brown rice and chopped spinach to the recipe, I microwave it for 1 1/2 minutes rather than 1 minute to allow for the fact that it is usually cold from refrigeration and it is mixed in with the other ingredients.

You can play with the seasonings so that the recipe matches your favorite flavors. One word of caution though. It's easy to overlook the high sodium (salt) levels in many seasonings. For example,

most hot sauces are high in sodium. That's why I use chili powder instead. It's low in sodium and it doesn't make the recipe watery.

To your health and fitness,

Brad Paul