



tempted by tempeh

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30 Creative Recipes for Fermented Soybean Cakes

Tempeh, or fermented soybean cake, is a traditional Indonesian food that is highly versatile to cook with. Discover the exciting ways to prepare delicious tempeh at home with this collection of 30 creative recipes that range from savoury snacks and hearty mains to delightful desserts. This book also looks at the nutrition of tempeh and includes a fully illustrated step-by-step guide on how to make tempeh in your own kitchen. Whether you are new to tempeh or are already familiar with it, you will be inspired by how effortless it is to incorporate this incredibly nutritious soy food into any meal.

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Dr Susianto Tseng & Dr George Jacobs
Recipes by Pauline Menezes

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6 Reasons To Eat More Tempeh



1

It contains all the essential amino acids.

2

It adds important vitamins and minerals to our diet.

3

It can improve our digestive health.

4

It is a delicious and versatile ingredient.

5

It is affordable.

6

It is easy to make.



For Review Only

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For Review introduction Only

Tempeh (pronounced tem-pay) is a fermented soybean cake that originated in Indonesia. Unlike its fellow soy product tofu, tempeh has yet to enjoy widespread popularity around the world. Thus, this book aims to promote the enjoyment of tempeh by sharing more about this nutritious fermented food and how it can be prepared. This chapter reviews the history of tempeh and discusses the benefits of eating tempeh.

The Origins of Tempeh

Across the globe, many cultures have long used fermentation as a way of processing and preserving food. The Japanese have natto and miso, while the Koreans love their kimchi. According to some historians, kombucha, an increasingly popular fermented beverage, can trace its origins to China. Nata de coco comes from the Philippines, sourdough is quite likely to have originated in Egypt, and yoghurt may have begun in Turkey.

Tempeh is Indonesia's gift to the world. While the term 'tempeh' is commonly used today to refer to a fermented soybean product, there are other varieties of tempeh made with other legumes or seeds. Indonesians were probably fermenting other foods, such as coconut, before soybeans arrived from China approximately a thousand years ago. Written records put tempeh's development in Indonesia at around 1700, although some historians have suggested that its origin may go as far back as 2,000 years ago or more. The earliest known mention of tempeh in written form is in the *Serat Centhini*, a 12-volume work written around 1814. The work makes a reference to "onions and uncooked témpé". About 130 years later, tempeh had travelled to Europe — it was being produced in the Netherlands at the end of World War II.

The Health Benefits of Fermented Foods and Tempeh

To understand why fermented foods are enjoyed by many cultures, we can look to the health benefits of food fermentation. Fresh food is great, but fermentation, when done properly, has its advantages. First, fermentation provides us with more variety in our diets. This was felt more keenly in the days before food could be refrigerated or frozen, when fermentation was a more commonly employed method of food preservation. As fermentation inhibits the growth of microorganisms that cause foods to spoil, it allows us to consume seasonal foods (like fruits and vegetables) when they are not available fresh. Although we do not rely heavily on fermentation for food preservation presently, fermented foods add variety in supply and taste to our diets.

chinese-style sauce

This sauce can be used in place of sauces that are a staple in Chinese cooking, such as mushroom sauce or oyster sauce.

Makes 400 ml

3–5 dried Chinese mushrooms
50 g tempeh
100–110 g sugar
3 Tbsp + 300 ml water
½ sheet nori
1–2 Tbsp salt
1 Tbsp light soy sauce
1½ tsp dark soy sauce
4 tsp cornflour, mixed with
2 Tbsp water

Rinse mushrooms and place in a small bowl. Fill the bowl with enough hot water to cover mushrooms and leave to soak for 1–2 hours.

Preheat oven to 180°C. Cut tempeh into 3- to 4-cm long strips and arrange on a baking tray. Bake for 20 minutes or until crispy, flipping tempeh over midway to ensure even dehydrating. Set aside.

Prepare an ice bath.

In a heavy-bottom pot over medium-high heat, bring sugar and 3 Tbsp water to a boil, stirring briskly until sugar is dissolved. Stop stirring and let the syrup bubble gently until it turns amber. Remove immediately from the heat and sit the pot in the prepared ice bath for about 10 seconds to stop the cooking. Transfer the pot out of the ice bath and set caramelised syrup aside to cool.

Drain mushrooms and squeeze them to remove excess water. Reserve soaking liquid. Cut mushrooms into small pieces and discard the stems.

Place tempeh in a food processor. Add 300 ml water, mushrooms, soaking liquid, nori, salt and soy sauces, then blend until puréed.

Stir purée into caramelised syrup and bring mixture to a boil over medium heat. As soon as the mixture starts to boil, stir in half of the cornflour slurry. Stir to combine until the mixture reaches the desired consistency. If the sauce is too thin, adjust with more cornflour slurry.

Store in a clean dry jar. Keep at room temperature for up to 1 week or refrigerated for 1 month.

TIP

- To increase or decrease the recipe amount, keep the syrup's ratio of water to sugar at 1:4, and adjust the rest of the ingredients to follow proportionately.



tempeh hummus

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This is a go-to dish for those who want to prepare food without any fuss—no cooking is required.

Serves 4–6

200–300 g tempeh, roughly chopped

240 g canned chickpeas or white beans, rinsed and drained

2 cloves garlic, peeled and roughly chopped

¼ tsp cumin powder or 1 sprig flat leaf parsley, stem removed and finely chopped (optional)

Juice of 1 lemon

3 Tbsp olive oil or tempeh-infused oil (see page 62)

6 Tbsp vegetable stock or water

Salt, to taste

Ground white pepper, to taste

A sprinkle of chilli powder or cayenne pepper (optional)

Place tempeh, chickpeas, garlic, cumin powder or chopped parsley, lemon juice and oil in a blender. Blend until smooth. If the mixture is lumpy or dry, adjust by adding vegetable stock a tablespoonful at a time until the desired consistency is reached.

Add salt and pepper to taste and blend until well combined. Transfer to a serving bowl and sprinkle with chilli powder or cayenne pepper to garnish.

Serve with toasted bread or crackers.

Store in an airtight container and keep refrigerated for up to 4 days.



tempeh nest

Fresh tempeh nestled in fine golden threads of spun sugar makes an exciting and delicious treat for any special occasion.

Serves 8

400 g tempeh

200 g castor sugar

8 wooden skewers,
soaked in water overnight

Preheat oven to 180°C.

Cut tempeh into 3 x 8-cm slices that are 1.5-cm thick. Thread each slice onto a skewer and arrange on a baking tray. Bake for 10 minutes on each side until golden brown. Alternatively, instead of baking skewered tempeh, fry the slices in a lightly oiled non-stick frying pan over low heat until lightly browned before skewering them. Flip often to prevent charring.

Prepare a shallow ice bath.

Heat sugar in a heavy-bottomed pot over medium-low heat, stirring constantly until the sugar is dissolved. Cook until the syrup is light golden. Swirl the syrup in the pot and continue heating gently until it is caramelised.

Remove immediately from the heat and place the pot in the prepared ice bath for 10 seconds to stop the cooking.

Transfer the pot out of the ice bath, dip a metal fork into the caramel and lift it up. When fine strands form, stretch them around a skewered tempeh quickly to make a nest around it. Repeat for the remaining skewered tempeh.

If the caramel is no longer able to be pulled to form thread-like strands because it is cooled and too thick, heat it over low heat until it reaches the right consistency again.

Serve immediately.

TIPS

- Be very careful when making caramel. To prevent mishaps, be organised, wear gloves and only touch the caramel with kitchen tools before it has cooled down.
- Any leftover caramel can be drizzled on a non-stick heat-resistant surface to form flat decorative pieces. These can also be gently shaped into small spheres before the caramel cools and sets. Store in an airtight container and keep frozen for up to 1 week.
- To store leftover caramel to be used again, pour it into an airtight porcelain container and let cool. Keep refrigerated for up to 1 week.



about the authors **For Review Only**



Dr Susianto Tseng holds a doctorate in Public Health Nutrition from Universitas Indonesia for his research on the presence of vitamin B12 in tempeh for human health. He is the founder and president of the World Vegan Organisation and a lecturer at STIKes Kuningan. He is an international speaker on vegan nutrition and the author of several vegan nutrition cookbooks, including *The Miracle of Tempe* and *The Miracle of Vegan*.



Dr George Jacobs is a university lecturer and a writer. He serves on the board of Kampung Senang Education and Charity Foundation and is president of Centre for a Responsible Future. George was part of the team that produced three other cookbooks: *New Asian Traditions Vegetarian Cookbook*, *The Heart Smart Oil Free Cookbook*, and *At Home: From Pot to Pot*. He frequently writes and gives talks on topics related to plant based diets.



Pauline Menezes is a British expatriate working in Singapore who has been exploring plant-based cuisine for 25 years. Her first cookbook, *At Home From Pot To Pot*, won the top prize at the Gourmand World Cookbook Awards 2017 in the Vegan category. In her second book, Pauline dives deeper into food cultivation and guides readers through the process of making tempeh, the humble superior food, and turning it into entrées, mains, drinks and desserts.



photographer

Clarence Tan is a freelance photographer and the owner of Tangzin Photography. His main focus is portraiture and fashion, but he also enjoys the occasional foray into food photography. He previously served as the president of the Vegetarian Society (Singapore) and remains active in it. Clarence is also a music producer, composer and arranger and had previously worked in radio as a producer/presenter.