

K's Kitchen: Starting the year with a healthy dish

By Kathryn Reed

It's rare in winter when I want salad to be my main meal. I'm usually craving something warm.

On this particular day I needed healthy more than anything else because s'mores and wine were what I had consumed most of the previous day. With this particular salad, it is warm because of the tofu.

And with the holidays behind us, eating healthfully may return to normal for many of us.

However, just say tofu and so many people turn up their noses. I understand. If it's not cooked correctly, it really is a turn off because of the texture, taste and appearance. This recipe, though, might make you a convert.

I cooked the tofu in the oven, but it could easily be grilled.

I used spinach for the greens because I had some in the fridge. I just added a carrot and mushrooms. You are going to want to make a regular salad, then you'll add the tofu and special dressing. Pay attention to which vegetables you think will go well with the dressing.

I also used vegannaise, but real mayonnaise will do the same thing.

With tofu being a great source of protein, no need to add more. Think of this like a vegetarian chef's salad, but without the nasty processed meat and questionable dressing.

The amount of dressing is enough for a salad for four. Just don't dress the salad – any salad – until you are ready to

serve it and only dress the amount you believe will be consumed because it's seldom good the next day.

I had lots of extra dressing. Some I used in a stir fry – excellent. The rest I used as a spread on a heated tortilla with the leftover tofu – which I also heated. This, too, was great.



Greens with Tofu

For Tofu

1 package extra firm tofu

2 T sesame oil

2 T soy sauce

1 tsp brown sugar

$\frac{1}{4}$ tsp cayenne

$\frac{1}{4}$ tsp garlic powder

Dressing

$\frac{1}{3}$ C tahini

2 T veganaise or mayonnaise

$1\frac{1}{2}$ T rice vinegar

1 T sesame oil

3 cloves garlic, minced

1/8 tsp pepper

Heat oven to 400 degrees.

Press tofu between paper towels to remove excess water. Cut tofu in half and then in thirds. Place the six slices on a rimmed baking sheet.

Whisk the six tofu ingredients together and then pour over tofu, coating both sides.

Cook for about 15 minutes, until there is firmness to the tofu and it turns golden or dark brown. For extra crispiness, cook under broiler at the end. Cut tofu into cubes.

Prepare salad.

Combine dressing ingredients in small bowl.

Add tofu to salad, then add dressing.