

Lemongrass Tofu Bánh Mì | Vietnamese Sandwich

Swick

Serves 2 to 4 | Active Time: 45 minutes | Total Time: 1 hour

Step 1: Marinating the Tofu

- 1/4 cup Fish-Less Fish Sauce
- 1/4 cup fresh lime juice
- 1/8 cup mirin
- 1/8 cup ponzu
- 2 tbsp minced lemongrass
- freshly ground white pepper, to taste
- 1 tsp sriracha, or to taste
- 175 gr pkg super firm tofu, sliced into 8 pieces lengthwise

For the fish sauce, we used this Fish-less Fish Sauce; however, there are some vegan store-bought recipes on the market.

To make the marinade, place all of the ingredients, except the tofu, into a high-speed blender and blend until smooth.

Pour the marinade over the tofu and store for at least 1 to 2 hours — or better yet, overnight — in the refrigerator.

Note king oyster mushrooms or even tempeh could be used instead of tofu. That being said, the tofu really is great in these sandwiches.

Step 2: Pickling the Vegetables

- 1 to 1 1/2 cup Pickled Vegetables

For the pickled vegetables, we used this recipe for Cucumber Sunomono, but instead of all cucumbers, we used a mixture of julienned carrots, daikon and Persian cucumbers (the smaller cucumbers).

Step 3: Cooking the Tofu

- oil, as needed for frying

To cook the tofu, remove it from the marinade — being sure to save the leftover marinade.

Next, heat a large frypan over medium-high heat. Once hot, add a bit of oil, followed by the tofu slices. Let cook for a couple of minutes on the first side, until golden. Flip the tofu and then spoon some of the reserved marinade over the tempeh. Let the sauce reduce down until it starts to thicken. Continue to spoon the marinade over the tofu and reduce until it nicely caramelizes the edges of the tofu.

Once done, turn off the heat and let the tofu sit while you gather all of your mise en place for assembling the sandwiches.

Step 4: Assembling the Sandwich

- 1/4 cup Mushroom Pâté (optional)
- 1/4 cup vegan mayonnaise
- 1 to 2 tsp sriracha hot sauce, or to taste
- 1/4 bunch cilantro
- 1 jalapeño, thinly sliced
- 2 Vietnamese Bánh Mì Baguette

While these sandwiches are delicious without the Mushroom Pâté, many traditional Bánh Mì Sandwiches call for paté.

Mix the mayonnaise and sriracha together. Adjust the amount of hot sauce to suit your tastes — keeping in mind that the sandwich is meant to have a bit of kick to it.

For the cilantro, remove any thick stems, but leave the pieces whole.

The bread for these sandwiches is very important. For the BEST results, be sure to use Vietnamese baguette, which can be found in Vietnamese bakeries and/or Vietnamese grocery stores. Vietnamese baguettes are similar to the traditional French baguette; however, they are typically made with rice flour and wheat flour. They are also typically airier and have a thinner crust. They are also generally smaller than a classic French baguette and are intended to be a single-serving size.

To assemble the sandwiches, cut the bread almost all the way through, but leave a tiny bit on one edge still together — this just helps the ingredients stay in the sandwich when you are eating it. Next, spread some of the sriracha mayonnaise onto each side of the bread. Note, if using the mushroom pâté, spread that onto one side as well.

Next, place 4 pieces of tofu onto the bottom half of the bread and then top with some of the pickled vegetables, cilantro and some of the thinly sliced jalapeños. Serve immediately.

Chef's Notes

These can also be made into delicious spring rolls and/or little appetizers or tapas. To make them into tapas-sized portions, simply cut the bread across, into rounds and then garnish as you would the sandwich.