

TO VEGETABLES
with love

Turmeric broccoli, tofu and rice soup

© Hetty Lui McKinnon for To Vegetables, With Love

This recipe hits somewhere between a soup and jook. You could easily thicken it up by adding more rice or less stock, or loosen it up by adding less rice or more stock. This is what I would call a gentle soup. The turmeric imparts deep earthy smokiness but it is not overpowering. There are notes of ginger and garlic to balance the sweetness of the leeks. The tofu adds body (and protein for those who find this important).

My overarching vision for this soup was a sea of broccoli, still green and slightly crisp from restrained cooking. By all means, cook it more if prefer it more tender, but I am always attracted to a soup which offers contrasting textures.

Basmati rice is the best choice here because it cooks so quickly. Since it's not an overly starchy rice, it will stay quite separated, and light. I like this finish in this soup but it is also acceptable to use a starchier variety like long grain or arborio to get a thicker, more velvety soup. And here's a curveball - if you're looking for something richer, add 1 can of coconut milk. It becomes sweeter and almost like a curry.

Turmeric broccoli, tofu and rice soup

Serves 4

extra-virgin olive oil

1 leek, trimmed, white and green parts sliced (or 1 brown/yellow onion, sliced)

2 inch (5cm) piece ginger, peeled and finely chopped

3 cloves garlic, finely chopped

2 teaspoons turmeric

1/2 cup (90g) rice, preferably basmati

sea salt and black pepper

5 1/4 cups (1250ml) vegetable stock

1 pound (450g) silken tofu

1 large head broccoli (about 450g / 1 pound), cut into very small pieces

handful coriander leaves, to serve

finely sliced scallions, to serve

soy sauce or maggi seasoning sauce, to serve (optional)

chili oil or crisp, to serve (optional)

Heat a large pot on medium. Add 2 tablespoons of olive oil, along with the leeks. Cook, stirring constantly, until the leeks are soft and starting to turn golden, about 5 to 6 minutes. Add the ginger, garlic and turmeric and stir until fragrant, about 30 to 60 seconds. Add the rice and stir to coat, and then add 1 teaspoon of sea salt and the vegetable stock. Cover and cook until for 10 minutes. Using a large spoon, scoop out big chunks of the tofu and add to the soup (don't worry, it will break down), along with the broccoli. Gently stir to submerge the broccoli and simmer, uncovered, until the tofu is heated through, and the broccoli is bright, green, and tender, about 5-7 minutes. Taste and season with sea salt and black pepper.

To serve, top with coriander, scallions, and a little soy sauce or maggi seasoning sauce and chili oil/crisp, if using.