

## Vegetarian Pad Thai with Baked Tofu

Serves 4

*This classic Thai dish has lots of ingredients, but cooks very quickly. Be sure to prep everything before you start cooking.*

### **For the baked tofu:**

15 ounces firm tofu  
2 teaspoons vegetable oil

### **For the Pad Thai:**

2 tablespoons tamarind pulp  
1 cup boiling water  
3 1/2 tablespoons packed light brown sugar  
3 tablespoons nam pla (fish sauce)  
1/4 teaspoon salt  
8 ounces flat rice stick noodles  
2 teaspoons plus 1 tablespoon vegetable or canola oil  
2 large eggs, lightly beaten  
4 garlic cloves, minced  
3/4 finely chopped shallots  
6 green onions, roots and tips trimmed, halved and cut into 1-inch pieces  
1/4 cup roasted unsalted peanuts, chopped  
5 ounces mung bean sprouts, rinsed and drained  
Sriracha, to taste (optional)  
**Serve with:** 1 lime cut into 8 wedges

To make the baked tofu: Preheat the oven to 400 degrees. Remove the tofu from its packaging and pat it dry with paper towels. Wrap the block in clean paper towels and place on a clean plate. Put another plate atop the tofu and place a can or weight on top of the plate to press it down. Allow it to sit for 25 minutes. Unwrap the tofu and re-wrap it with fresh paper towels. Return the tofu between the two plates and weight it down again for another 20 minutes. Unwrap the pressed tofu and cut it into 1/2-inch cubes. Toss the cubes with two teaspoons of vegetable oil. Line a small baking sheet with parchment paper and spread the tofu out on the baking sheet. Bake for 40 minutes until golden brown. Set aside.

To make the pad thai: In a small bowl, pour the boiling water over the tamarind pulp. Stir and smash the tamarind pulp until it softens and a paste forms (about 5 minutes). Strain the mixture through a fine mesh sieve and discard the solids.

This recipe came from *Minced* at [www.mincedblog.com](http://www.mincedblog.com).

Pour the strained tamarind liquid in a saucepan and stir in the brown sugar, fish sauce, and salt. Bring to a boil then reduce the heat to medium-low and let simmer briefly, stirring constantly, until the sugar dissolves.

Put the rice noodles in a large bowl. Cover with boiling water and allow them to soak for about 20 minutes or until al dente. Drain the noodles and set them aside.

In a large wok, heat two teaspoons of vegetable oil over high heat. When hot, add the egg and cook briefly until the egg is cooked through and scrambled. Remove the egg from the wok and set it aside in a medium bowl.

Add the remaining 1 tablespoon of vegetable oil to the wok. When hot, add the garlic and shallot. Sauté until the garlic is lightly browned. Add the baked tofu and sauté briefly, about 1 minute. Remove the tofu and shallot-garlic mixture with a slotted spoon and put it in the bowl with the scrambled egg. Add the tamarind sauce to the wok and bring to a boil. Add the drained noodles and cook for about 2 minutes. Stir in the green onions, ½ of the peanuts, the bean sprouts and sriracha (if using). Cook the noodles for another minute or until they completely absorb the broth. Stir in the tofu-egg mixture and toss to combine. Serve immediately sprinkled with the remaining chopped peanuts and lime wedges. Have your satisfied guests do the dishes.

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