

Thai Coconut Soup with Tofu and Mushrooms

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1 1/2 cups unsweetened coconut milk*
2 tsp. minced ginger
2 tsp. grated lime zest
2 tsp. dried lemongrass
1 red bell pepper, sliced into matchstick-sized strips (reserve some for garnish)
3 cups mild vegetable stock**
1/2 to 2 teaspoons Thai red curry paste, depending on desired hotness
1 package (12-14 ounces) extra firm tofu, cut into small cubes (not silken tofu)
15 ounces canned straw mushrooms, drained and rinsed
2 tsp. vegan sugar or other sweetener
2 tablespoons light soy sauce
Salt to taste
Fresh lime juice to taste
Grated lime peel, for garnish

Combine lime zest, lemongrass, ginger, and coconut milk with stock in a large saucepan and bring to a boil. Reduce heat to medium-low and simmer for 5-10 minutes.

Add the curry paste a half-teaspoon at a time, stirring well to combine and tasting as you go to make sure you don't make it too spicy. Stir in the tofu, mushrooms, sugar, soy sauce, and salt, to taste. Simmer for about 10 more minutes. Add lime juice (I used the juice of half a lime) and serve over rice, garnished with red pepper strips and grated lime peel, with extra lime on the side.

**A note about the stock: Choose a very mild vegetable stock or broth, one without an overwhelming flavor of its own. A good option is Imagine Foods No-Chicken broth.

This came out delicious--redolent of coconut, ginger, and red curry. Adding a squeeze of lime juice just before serving really makes the flavors pop. I tried to be conservative with the curry paste, but I still managed to get it too spicy for my daughter. She wound up eating just the tofu and mushrooms on a bed of rice. Oh well--more coconut broth for the grown-ups!