

Good Mood Food

Quick vegan hot choc

Ingredients

30g good quality dark chocolate (approx. 3 squares), broken into small pieces
160ml unsweetened almond milk

Method

Put the chocolate pieces in a mug, add the milk and microwave on full power for 30 seconds. Stir then repeat. Repeat again giving the drink a final stir making sure all the chocolate is melted. Enjoy!

Questions/Notes

- You can use any chocolate really, but dark chocolate brings some health benefits – contains iron, fibre, magnesium, copper, may lower blood pressure and is a source of antioxidants.
- A flavoured chocolate works well – chilli and the Co-op orange flavour are good examples.
- You can add some cinnamon or mix with a cinnamon stick. Cinnamon is a good source of antioxidants, is a prebiotic which improves gut health, and reduces blood pressure.

Kimchi pancakes

Ingredients

250g kimchi
160g flour (or 80g flour, 80g rice flour)
1tsp salt
200g firm tofu, thinly sliced
5 spring onions, chopped
Around 200g veg – one of or a mixture of beansprouts, carrots, radish, spinach, sweetcorn, courgette

Optional dipping sauce:

3 tbsp soy sauce
1.5 tbsp rice vinegar
2 tsp sesame oil
1 tsp caster sugar
Additional flavours – garlic, chilli (dried or fresh), sesame seeds, gochujang, ginger, spring onions etc

Method

Squeeze out as much moisture from the kimchi as you can and keep the juice. Top up to 200ml with water.

In a large bowl whisk the flour, salt and kimchi water to a loose batter and mix in all the other ingredients. Leave to stand for 10 minutes.

Mix together the ingredients for the dipping sauce.

Heat a little oil in a non-stick pan and fry scoops of the batter for about 5 minutes or until the bottom is crispy, flip and cook until the other side is golden.

Notes/Questions

- There is growing evidence that fermented foods such as kimchi may improve intestinal health and as a result support the immune system and anti-inflammatory responses.
- Increasing evidence has associated gut microbiota to both gastrointestinal and extra-gastrointestinal diseases. Dysbiosis and inflammation of the gut have been linked to causing several mental illnesses including anxiety and depression, which are prevalent in society today.

Roast Salmon tray bake

Ingredients

800g mixed veg – asparagus, broccoli, peas, beans etc.
1 tsp sea salt flakes
1 tbsp sesame oil
4 salmon fillets
½ tbsp good soy sauce
½ tbsp sesame oil
½ tbsp honey
6cm fresh ginger, grated
1 lime, juice only
1 tbsp sesame oil
3 spring onions, finely sliced
1 handful of peanuts
1 red chilli, finely sliced

Method

Sprinkle the salt over the salmon fillets and leave for 30 mins. This both seasons the fish and firms up the texture a little.

Toss the veg in the sesame oil and spread out in a large roasting tin.

Mix together the soy sesame oil and honey and add the salmon to coat and place on the veg.

Roast for 20 minutes in a 180c fan/200c oven.

Mix together the rest of the ingredients and mix through the veg before serving. Serve with rice or noodles.

Questions/Notes

- Omega-3 fatty acids are a group of essential fats that you must obtain through your diet because your body can't produce them on its own.
- Fatty fish like salmon and albacore tuna are rich in two types of omega-3s — docosahexaenoic acid (DHA) and eicosapentaenoic acid (EPA) — that are linked to lower levels of depression.
- Omega-3s contribute to the fluidity of your brain's cell membrane and appear to play key roles in brain development and cell signalling.
- While research is mixed, one review of clinical trials showed that in some studies, consuming omega-3's in the form of fish oil lower depression scores.