

IN THE KITCHEN Faith Bahadurian

Tasty soups to warm up with this fall

A colorful photo on Facebook led me to this soupy column. A friend, Lisa Langmyhr Papp (who grew up in Montgomery), posted a gorgeous photo of the brilliant red borscht she'd just made with her friend Suzanne. They started with a recipe from simplyrecipes.com, but made modifications of their own (including omitting beef shank). My mashup of all of that is below.

Next, a recipe from local author (and dear friend) Angela Chang, whose latest book, "Delicious Tofu" provides a fascinating look at the history and cultural roots of tofu (worth the price alone), along with many recipes that use tofu in all its glorious forms. Her tofu pumpkin soup is perfect for the season.

Last up, a recipe from another excellent new cookbook, Jamie Schler's "Orange Appeal." I'd had my eye on this one because I love orange in both sweet and savory dishes, so I was delighted to win a copy on Linda Prospero's blog, Ciao Chow Linda — whoopee!

Borscht

This recipe has been liberally adapted from simplyrecipes.com. Serves 6 to 8. My friends' modifications included omitting beef shank, so they used a quality organic "bone broth" instead, and did without pieces of meat in the soup. — F.B.

Olive oil or vegetable oil

- 1 large onion, chopped (about 1 1/2 cups)
- 2 cloves garlic, minced
- 8 cups beef broth, ideally a good bone broth, divided
- 4 large beets (about 1 1/2 pounds), trimmed
- 4 carrots (1 pound), peeled, chopped
- 1 large russet potato (1 1/4 pound), peeled, cut into 1/2 inch cubes
- 2 cups thinly sliced cabbage
- 1/2 cup chopped fresh dill
- 3 tablespoons red wine vinegar
- 1 cup sour cream
- Salt and freshly ground black pepper to taste

Heat 2 teaspoons oil in a large, thick-bottomed pot on medium heat. Add the onion and garlic, let cook and soften, about 5 minutes. Add 4 cups of the broth, bring to a boil, simmer 10 minutes, and set aside.

In a sauce pan, boil beets for a few minutes to easily remove skins. Then cube. Peel and chop the carrots, and potatoes into 1/2-inch pieces, keeping them separate.

Toss beets and carrots with a teaspoon or two of olive oil and spread them out in a single layer on a foil- or parchment-lined roasting pan. Roast in a 400-degree oven for 15 minutes. Toss the potatoes with olive oil and make room for them in the roasting pan, and roast everything an additional 15 minutes.

Finish cooking the soup: Return

the pot with onions to the stove and add the remaining broth, the carrots, beets, and potato. Add the sliced cabbage, bring to a simmer, and cook for another 15 minutes or so, until the cabbage is cooked through. Add the vinegar and season to taste with salt and freshly ground black pepper.

Serve with a dollop of sour cream and a sprinkling of fresh dill on each serving. (Even better the next day.)

Pumpkin tofu soup

Adapted from "Delicious Tofu: Recipes and Lore from the Land of Tofu for Meat Lovers and Vegetarians," Angela Chang, Page Publishing (2017).

Serves 6-8.

- 1 container soft or firm tofu
- 1 heaping tablespoon miso (or soy sauce)
- 2 teaspoons canola oil
- 2 cups cleaned and peeled pumpkin (or orange squash of choice), chunked
- 2 cups vegetable broth (chicken is good, too)
- 1 cup water
- 1 teaspoon ground cinnamon
- 1/4 teaspoon ground nutmeg
- Salt to taste

Lightly rinse tofu, drain well. Cut into half length-wise, then into slices crosswise. In a medium bowl, dissolve miso with 3 tablespoons warm water (or add soy sauce to water). Soak the tofu in this flavorful juice for at least an hour.

Drain marinated tofu well in a colander. In a large non-stick pan, heat oil over medium heat. Swirl pan to coat with oil then add tofu slices. Cook until lightly browned, about 2 minutes, then flip over to brown other side. Remove and set aside.

Steam pumpkin (or squash) in a steamer or bowl over boiling water for about 15 minutes or until soft. Cool slightly and purée with stick blender or in processor.

Transfer pumpkin to a medium soup pot. Add tofu and the vegetable broth and water; cook over medium heat for 2 minutes. Mix cinnamon and nutmeg with a tablespoon or two of water (so it doesn't clump) and stir into pot. Add salt to taste, stir, and cook for another minute before serving hot.

Spiced red lentil and carrot soup

Adapted from "Orange Appeal, Savory & Sweet," Jamie Schler, Gibbs Smith (2017). Serves 4. You could substitute half a dried Mexican pasilla or ancho pepper for the smaller Spanish ñora pepper called for in the recipe. — F.B.

- 1 cup red/coral lentils
- 2 tablespoons olive oil
- 2 sweet carrots, peeled and chopped
- 1 medium onion, peeled and chopped
- 2 cloves garlic, peeled and minced



Delicious TOFU
Recipes and Lore from the Land of Tofu
for Meat Lovers and Vegetarians



ANGELA CHANG

The author made the pumpkin tofu soup pictured at top from a recipe in Angela Chang's "Delicious Tofu."

- 1 orange, finely zested
- 3 1/2 cups vegetable stock or water
- 1 cup orange juice
- 1 teaspoon ground turmeric
- 1 teaspoon ground cumin
- 1/4 teaspoon ground cardamom
- 1/2 teaspoon ground ginger
- 1 teaspoon ground coriander
- 1/2 teaspoon salt, or more to taste
- 1 dried ñora pepper, split, seeds removed (optional)
- Garnish: Greek yogurt and chopped fresh cilantro
- Rinse lentils under cool water, set aside. Heat oil in soup pot and sauté

carrots, onions, garlic, and zest about 5 minutes. Add lentils, the stock or water, orange juice, spices, coriander, salt, and dried pepper. Bring to a boil, lower heat, simmer 20-25 minutes.

Remove pot from heat, remove and discard the pepper, and purée soup (carefully!) with immersion blender, adding a little more water if you like thinner soup. Heat gently before serving. Garnish with yogurt and cilantro.

Faith Bahadurian blogs at njspace.net (also Twitter @njspace).