

# DESTINATION ASIA

## Mapo Tofu

Roughly translated to “pockmarked grandma’s tofu”, mapo tofu is a popular Chinese dish from Sichuan Province, where the signature spice of the region – the Sichuan peppercorn – gives dishes a unique “numbing” effect. Mapo tofu is eaten across the world and takes on many forms as restaurants put their own spin on it, often lessening spice levels and adding different vegetables.

**Preparation time** 5 Minutes

**Cooking time** 15 Minutes

**Serves** 3 people

### Ingredients

- ½ cup oil
- 6-8 dried red chilies, roughly chopped
- 3 tbsp ginger, finely minced
- 100g spiny amaranth
- 1-2 tbsp spicy bean sauce
- 450g silken tofu, cut into 1 inch cubes
- 1/4 tsp sesame oil (optional)
- 1 scallion, finely chopped
- 1-2 fresh Sichuan red chili peppers, thinly sliced
- 1 1/2 tbsp Sichuan peppercorns
- 3 tbsp garlic, finely minced
- 250g minced pork
- 2/3 cup chicken stock
- 1 1/2 tsp cornstarch
- 1/4 tsp sugar (optional)

### Steps

#### Instructions

1. On a medium heat, toast the chilies. Add ¼ cup of the oil and throw in the fresh and dried peppers. Stir occasionally and heat until fragrant. Remove from heat and set aside.
2. Heat the remaining ¼ cup of oil in your wok over medium heat. Add the ground Sichuan peppercorns and stir occasionally for 30 seconds. Add the ginger. After 1 minute, add the garlic. Fry for another minute, and then turn up the heat to high and add the ground pork. Break up the meat and fry it until it’s cooked through.
3. Add the spicy bean sauce and stir well. Then add ¾ cups of chicken broth to the wok and simmer.
4. In a small bowl, add a ¼ cup of water to the cornstarch and mix until thoroughly combined.
5. Add the cornstarch mixture to the sauce and stir. Let it bubble away until the sauce starts to thicken.
6. Stir in the chilli oil made earlier into the sauce and add the tofu. Use a spatula to gently toss the tofu in the sauce. Cook for 3-5 minutes. To finish, add the sesame oil, sugar, and scallions and stir until the scallions are wilted.

### Notes / Tips

- 1 Ready-made Mapo Tofu sauce packages are available in most Asian supermarkets.

*A recipe from Destination Asia China*

