



PANISSE OR BURMESE TOFU

By Ben Martin Horst | Makes 30 Squares

INGREDIENTS

- 1 qt water
- 2 cups chickpea (garbanzo bean) flour
- 2 tsp ground turmeric (optional, for Burmese tofu)
- 1 tsp kosher salt, or to taste
- 2 tsp oil, plus more for frying (use olive oil for panisse, or coconut, peanut, or other vegetable oil for Burmese tofu)

DIRECTIONS

1. Lightly oil a 9-inch-by-9-inch baking dish.
2. In a saucepan, heat the water with the salt, 2 tsp oil, and turmeric (if using), until nearly, but not quite, boiling. Whisk in the chickpea flour.
3. Turn heat down to medium and continue to whisk until the mixture begins to thicken, about 2-3 minutes.
4. Switch from the whisk to a wooden spoon and stir constantly over medium heat for about 10 more minutes, or until the mixture is very thick and holds its shape. Reduce heat as necessary to avoid scorching.
5. Remove from heat and scrape the mixture into the oiled baking dish and smooth the top. Allow to cool, either on the counter or in the fridge, until firm and set (about 30-60 minutes).
6. When firm, unmold the mixture by inverting over a cutting board. Cut into 1-inch squares. (There's no need to be finicky about the shape: in France, they're usually cut into rounds, in Myanmar into squares, but they're equally good cut into batons or wedges.)
7. In a heavy skillet, heat 1/4-inch of oil until it begins to shimmer. Fry the panisses or Burmese tofu in batches, being careful not to crowd the pan. When the first side is golden and crisp, use tongs to turn them until they have fried on all sides. Remove them from the pan and drain on paper towels. As you continue frying the rest, add more oil as needed, but be sure to allow the oil time to heat before adding another batch.

TO SERVE

Panisse: While still hot, sprinkle with salt and freshly ground black pepper, and eat as a snack, or to accompany a main dish. Alternatively, sprinkle them with sugar as a snack.

Burmese tofu: Eat as a snack, with a dipping sauce made from Sriracha, tamarind paste, and honey. You can also use it to replace croutons in a salad, or as the star ingredient in a curry with fresh tomatoes, onions, garlic, cilantro, chili, and fish sauce. Burmese tofu with sticky rice is a common breakfast in Myanmar.