

# Sambal Goreng Tofu

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## Sambal Goreng Tofu

This sambal goreng tofu recipe is easy and delicious. The tofu stays **crispy** and the Indonesian spicy sauce is full of flavor. The perfect **vegetarian** dish, if you leave the trassi (fermented shrimp paste) out of the bumbu (herb mix). We mainly eat this dish as a substitute for meat and of course because it is so pleasing.

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Sambal goreng tofu # 61 translated from Beb Vuyk's Groot Indonesisch Kookboek, page 84.

## Ingredients

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- 1/2 block of tofu
- 3 tablespoons of sliced onions
- 1 clove of sliced garlic
- 1 teaspoon sambal terasi (or one teaspoon sambal ulek and 1/2 a teaspoon of terasi)
- 1 teaspoon of laos (galangal)
- asem the size of a walnut (tamarind)
- 1 stalk sereh (lemongrass)
- 1 salam leave (Asian bay leave)
- 1 tablespoon sweet soy sauce (kecap manis)
- 1/8 block of santen (coconut cream)
- 6 tablespoons of oil
- salt
- pepper

1. Cut the block of tofu into slices of about 2 cm thick
  2. Cut each slice into six pieces
  3. Dilute the asem (tamarind) together with salt in 4 tablespoons of water.
  4. Strain this and let the pieces of tofu seasoned with black pepper, marinate in the asem for 1 hour and scoop through once in a while.
  5. Let the tofu drain and fry the pieces in the oil until golden brown.
  6. Rub onions, garlic, sambal and galangal together into a paste.
  7. Fry this in the oil.
  8. Add the lemongrass, coconut cream and salam (Asian bay leaf) and warm up the pieces of tofu in this sauce.
  9. Add the sweet soy sauce before serving
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I bought my block of **tofu** at my local supermarket. I can buy **lemongrass** (sereh) at the supermarket too, but **asem** is a bit more difficult to get there.

Asem is **tamarind**. I go to my local Asian store to buy asem and salam leaves. The asem I buy is already filtered.





Asem bean (tamarind). I buy already filtered tamarind in a jar.

**Salam** is **Asian bay** leave and I can buy it fresh or dried at my local Asian food store. Salam has an almost cinnamon-like quality. I love to use salam because it makes every dish a genuine Indonesian flavored dish.

**Santen** is cooked **coconut cream** and is sold in blocks at the supermarket. You can also use **1/8 liter thick coconut milk**.

**Trassi** is fermented **shrimp paste** and is widely used in Indonesian food, especially in vegetable dishes. The use of trassi makes the dish no longer vegetarian. You can leave it out but I think it really does affect the flavor.

Sambal trassi (chili salsa with fermented shrimp) is used in this recipe. You can make sambal trassi on the spot by add a chili with a teaspoon of trassi to the spice paste (bumbu).

## Marinating the tofu

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This recipe starts with **marinating the tofu**. Tofu does not have much flavor by itself. I cut the tofu into cubes and sprinkle them with a teaspoon of black pepper. Then I mix four tablespoons of water with the asem and half a teaspoon of salt.



## Make the bumbu (spice mix)

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While my tofu is sucking up the acidic tamarind flavor, I focus on my spice mix (bumbu). I use my blender today. It is also possible to rub this mix (like Indonesians do) in a cobek (mortar). The flavors are even more intense when a mortar is used, but I feel a bit lazy today, so the blender is fine.

I blend **onions, garlic, sambal and galangal** together into a bumbu.





I pulse my machine about 5 times; until everything is very finely chopped and all the flavors are well released. I give it an extra stir with a spoon so all the spices are mixed well.





## Fry tofu

My tofu has been marinated long enough, so time to fry. I use deep-frying oil. The package states it contains an anti-foam agent to prevent oil splatters (and smell).



I fry my tofu until **golden brown** (about 5 minutes per batch). I fry about 5 pieces at the time, otherwise the oil cools too much.

When the tofu is done, the **bumbu** (herb paste) is stir-fried in some oil (two table spoons). When the onions in the bumbu are tender, the **salam leaf** and **sereh** can be added.

The block of santen is thick and hard. It only melts when I add some **water** to the mix in the pan.





I have drained my fried tofu on some kitchen towels. They are now ready to dip into the pan too. I mix the tofu well into the sticky bumbu in the pan.



### Kecap manis (sweet soy sauce)

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And now the finishing touch: **the sweet soy sauce**. I use the tastiest soy sauce I know: Ketjap Manis from ABC. This thick and sweet sauce gives exactly the extra layer of flavor that this sambal goreng with tofu needs. It extinguishes the heat a bit and coats the outside of the crispy tofu with a sweet finish in flavor. Selamat makan!



