



"Moo Shu" Tofu Lettuce Wraps

By Erin Fletter

Prep Time 15 / **Cook Time** 6 / **Serves** 4 - 6

Fun-Da-Mentals Kitchen Skills

chop: to cut something into small, rough pieces using a blade.

cube: to cut into square-shaped, bite-sized pieces with an equal 1/3 to 1/2-inch length on all sides, slightly larger than diced.

mix: to thoroughly combine two or more ingredients until uniform in texture.

sauté: to cook or brown food in a pan containing a small quantity of butter, oil, or other fat.

slice: to cut into thin pieces using a sawing motion with your knife.

wrap: to encase a food filling with an edible outer package (wrapping), like lettuce, pita, rice paper, seaweed, or tortilla; the wrapped food may also be called a wrap.

Equipment

- Skillet
- Large mixing bowl
- Cutting board
- Kid-safe knife
- Wooden spoon
- Liquid measuring cup
- Measuring spoons
- Grater
- Serving bowl

- Tongs
- Plates (2)
- Tablespoon

Ingredients

"Moo Shu" Tofu Lettuce Wraps

- 2 T vegetable oil **
- 8 oz firm tofu **(for SOY ALLERGY sub 1 C scrambled egg if no egg allergy present)**
- 4 green onions, white and green parts
- 2 tsp cornstarch
- 1 8-oz can sliced water chestnuts (for 2/3 C chopped)
- 1/2 T grated fresh ginger
- 3 T soy sauce **(for GLUTEN ALLERGY sub liquid aminos; for SOY/GLUTEN ALLERGY sub coconut aminos)**
- 4 T hoisin sauce **(for GLUTEN ALLERGY sub liquid aminos + 1 tsp sugar; for SOY/GLUTEN ALLERGY sub coconut aminos + 1 tsp sugar)**
- 1 large head butter lettuce, leaves separated
- 1 package taco-size flour tortilla (warmed), at least one for each kid **(Omit for GLUTEN ALLERGY and use butter lettuce leaf)**

Food Allergen Substitutions

"Moo Shu" Tofu Lettuce Wraps

Soy: Substitute canola oil or other nut-free high-smoking point oil for vegetable oil. For 8 oz firm tofu, substitute 1 C scrambled egg if no egg allergy is present.

Gluten: Omit flour tortilla and use butter lettuce leaf. Substitute liquid aminos for soy sauce. Substitute liquid aminos + 1 tsp sugar for hoisin sauce (a bit of sunflower seed butter can also help thicken).

Soy/Gluten: Substitute coconut aminos for soy sauce. Substitute coconut aminos + 1 tsp sugar for hoisin sauce (a bit of sunflower seed butter can also help thicken).

Instructions

"Moo Shu" Tofu Lettuce Wraps

cube + slice + mix

While adults warm **2 tablespoons of vegetable oil** in a skillet over medium-high heat, kids can cube **8 ounces of firm tofu** and add it to a large bowl. Next, they can slice **4 green onions** and add them to the bowl. Then, have kids measure out **2 teaspoons of cornstarch** into the tofu mixture and mix well to combine.

sauté + chop + grate

Adults add the tofu mixture to the skillet on medium-high heat and sauté, stirring constantly, until the tofu is heated through and broken up into pieces, about 3 to 4 minutes. While it cooks, kids can chop **1 can of sliced water chestnuts** for **2/3 cup**. Adults grate **1/2 inch ginger root** for **1/2 tablespoon**. Add them to the large bowl.

measure + cook

Next, have kids measure and add **3 tablespoons soy sauce** and **4 tablespoons hoisin sauce** to the bowl and mix. Adults add the contents of the bowl to the skillet with the tofu and cook for about 1 minute more. Remove from the heat and transfer to a bowl.

warm + separate

Warm up a package of **12 small taco size flour tortillas** in a dry skillet or microwave and wash **1 head of butter lettuce**, separating the leaves. Set them on two separate plates for kids to choose from. They can make a lettuce wrap, a tortilla wrap, or they can have both! It's up to them!

fill + wrap + serve

Have kids take 1 lettuce leaf or tortilla at a time and spoon 1 tablespoon of the slightly cooled tofu mixture into the center and fold, wrapping the lettuce or tortilla around the filling. Serve with **Sweet Soy Dipping Sauce!** 🍴 "Hào chī" (How-CHEE) or "Delicious" in Chinese!

Featured Ingredient: Lettuce!

Hi! I'm Lettuce!

"I'm leafy, but not flaky! I have edible green or red leaves for making a salad and topping a sandwich."

History & Etymology

The earliest depiction of lettuce is on ancient Egyptian wall murals from at least 2700 BCE, depicting lettuce given to the fertility god Min.

The Ancient Egyptians cultivated lettuce plants that stood up rather than growing in heads, similar to our romaine. They domesticated wild plants and eventually cultivated the leaves to be less bitter. They used the oil from the plant seeds for cooking and medicine.

The Ancient Greeks learned about lettuce from the Egyptians and also tried to improve their taste. They, in turn, shared lettuce with the Ancient Romans, who called the plant "lactuca." Its Latin name became the name of the plant genus.

Lettuce spread across the Roman Empire to Europe. The French called it "laitue romaine" or "Roman lettuce." It eventually traveled to Asia, where China produced plants with thick, crunchy stems for cooking.

In the 1600s, Europeans began cultivating firm-head lettuces and loose-leaf lettuces. European explorers and settlers brought lettuce to the New World.

Thomas Jefferson is believed to have grown several varieties of lettuce at Monticello. One was a precursor to butter lettuce.

China produces the most lettuce in the world. California grows the most lettuce in the United States, followed by Arizona.

The word "lettuce" comes from Middle English, from the Old French "letues" or "laitues," from the Latin "lactuca," from "lac," meaning "milk" (due to the milky substance from cut stems).

Anatomy

Lettuce is an annual plant of the Asteraceae family, also known as the aster, daisy, or sunflower family. It is a member of the *Lactuca sativa* species. There are many subspecies and varieties of lettuce within that species.

The height of lettuce plants ranges from 6 to 12 inches. Leaves are usually green or red, and some are variegated (the edge or pattern is a different color).

Lettuce is primarily grown as a leaf vegetable or leafy green. The plant's seeds and stems are also used.

How to Buy, Store, & Eat

When buying lettuce, look for leaves without blemishes, discoloration, or wilting. Iceberg lettuce should have crisp, heavy, tight heads. Romaine leaves should be bright green and crisp. Butter lettuce heads should feel heavy for their size with bright-colored leaves.

If lettuce leaves are slightly wilting, you might be able to refresh them in cold water.

Before storing lettuce, remove any wilted leaves. Then, wrap the lettuce in paper towels to remove moisture and store it in your refrigerator's crisper drawer or an airtight container. If iceberg lettuce is wrapped in plastic wrap, you can leave the wrap around it and store it in the crisper until ready for use. Rinse leaves before using to remove any bugs, dirt, or sand. Pat them dry with paper towels or spin them in a salad spinner.

A few lettuce varieties are described below:

Iceberg (or crisphead) lettuce has a firm head with medium green leaves on the outside and pale green leaves on the inside. It is the most popular lettuce in the US. It can be chopped or torn to be used in salads, shredded to go in tacos, and its leaves separated to put on hamburgers and other sandwiches. It got the

name "iceberg" because it was transported in crushed ice, and the heads looked like icebergs. It is sensitive to heat. Iceberg lettuce has a sweet, not bitter, taste.

Leaf lettuce, also called bunching or cutting, has loosely bunched leaves. It can be used for salads, sandwiches, and wraps. Red leaf lettuces have dark red or purple leaves.

Romaine (or cos) lettuce has tall green leaves with firm ribs down the middle. They are often used in salads, especially Caesar salad. The leaves also hold up to being braised or added to soups. They have a slightly bitter taste compared to iceberg lettuce.

Butter lettuce, also known as butterhead, bigg, and Boston, has a loose head with sweet, tender, buttery leaves that can be green or red. It can be used for salad, sandwiches, and wraps.

Nutrition

Raw lettuce is mostly water. It has practically no fat or protein and minimal calories.

Lettuce contains varying levels of vitamins, depending on the variety. Lettuce with dark green leaves, like romaine, is a rich source of beta-carotene (vitamin A). It also has a good amount of folate (a B vitamin) and vitamin K. Iceberg lettuce also has a good amount of vitamin K.