

Jave Yoshimoto • Jave's Omega Mapo Tofu

My love for Mapo Tofu originated in Japan, where the flavor is considerably milder than the Szechuan version of the same dish to cater to the taste buds of the Japanese food lovers. Having grown up there in the first 9 years of my life, I've come to grow fond of this particular dish, and when I immigrated to the U.S., I kept searching for the same flavor and recipe by trying out the dish in various Chinese restaurants across the country.

What I found was that I liked little things that were done differently in each restaurant. Some restaurants only had the meat and the tofu. Others added onions or scallions, while another place added peas and carrots. I've come across one restaurant in Chicago that added mushrooms, which I truly enjoyed. As I learned to make this dish for myself, I decided to add every ingredient that I've come to enjoy and threw in my own mix of vegetables, such as spinach and bean sprouts. In the end, my mix of ingredients and sauces are something I still make to this day and share it with my friends and dear ones. I'm fairly proud to say that this is my studio assistant's favorite dish that she requests I make quite often.



Jave Yoshimoto, *Jave Yoshimoto's Mapo Tofu*, 2021, ink, watercolor and gouache on paper, 9" x 12".

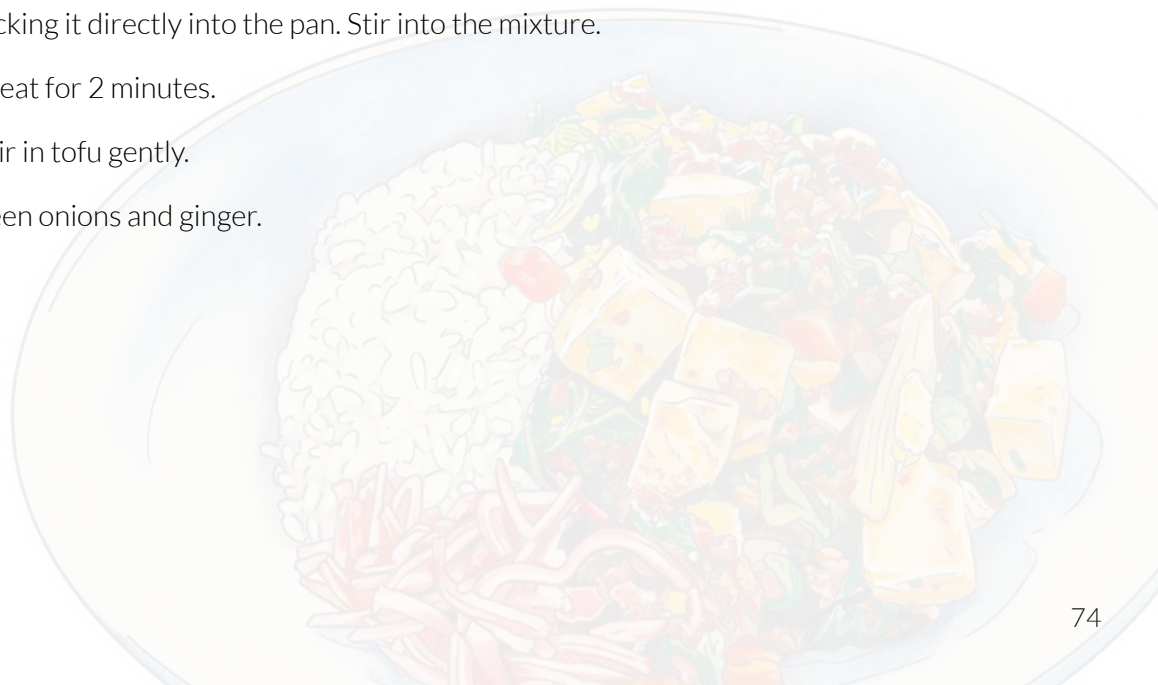
Jave's Omega Mapo Tofu Recipe

Ingredients:

- 1 pound ground meat of choice (traditionally pork, but any ground meat will work)
- 1 yellow onion, sliced
- 2/3 cup shitake mushrooms, sliced
- 1 tablespoon garlic, minced
- 2 large handfuls (or 1.5 cup) bean sprouts
- 1 cup frozen peas and carrots mixed vegetables
- 1 cup French style green beans
- 6 ounces (or 3/4 cup) frozen spinach
- 1 egg
- 3 ounces (or 1/3 cup) spicy bean sauce
- 3 ounces (or 1/3 cup) oyster sauce
- 1 tablespoon mirin
- 14 ounces container soft tofu
- 1 green onion stalk, chopped

Directions:

1. 1 tablespoon vegetable oil in deep frying pan.
2. Sauté onion with 1 tablespoon garlic until golden brown.
3. Add the ground meat, stir until cooked.
4. Add the chopped mushrooms, peas and carrots mixture, and spinach. Stir.
5. Simmer for 2 minutes on medium heat.
6. Add green beans and bean sprouts. Stir.
7. Add mirin and spicy bean sauce. Stir, adding 1/3 cup water.
8. Add the oyster sauce. Stir with another 2/3 cup water.
9. Add the egg, cracking it directly into the pan. Stir into the mixture.
10. Simmer on low heat for 2 minutes.
11. Turn off heat. Stir in tofu gently.
12. Garnish with green onions and ginger.



Jave Yoshimoto



Jave Yoshimoto is an artist and educator with a multi-cultural background. He was born in Japan to Chinese parents and immigrated to California at a young age. Yoshimoto has since traveled and lived in various states, which influenced his artistic practice. He believes in creating works that are socially conscious and true to his authentic self.

Yoshimoto received his Bachelor of Art from UC Santa Barbara, his Masters of Art in Art Therapy at the School of the Art Institute of Chicago, and his Masters of Fine Arts in Painting at Syracuse University.

He is a recipient of the 2015 Joan Mitchell Foundation's Painter's and Sculptor's grant, which he used to travel to Nepal and Lesvos Island in Greece to research on the topics of humanitarian crises, survival, and resilience. He has been featured in numerous publications such as Huffington Post, Chicago Tribune, New American Paintings, Guernica Magazine, among others. He received a letter of recognition from the United Nations, and exhibits his works nationally and internationally.

He has been artist in residence at various residencies across the U.S., including Vermont Studio Center, Kimmel Harding Nelson Center for the Arts, Jentel, Tulsa Artist Fellowship, Joan Mitchell Foundation, among others.

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Jave Yoshimoto, *Memento Mori*, 2021, laser carved digital illustration, gouache on wood.