African Peanut Stew

MAKES 6 SERVINGS

1 medium eggplant (1 pound), peeled and cut into 1-inch cubes (about 6 cups)
3 tablespoons peanut oil, divided
1 teaspoon salt, divided
2 large onions, chopped
2 cloves garlic, minced
2 Tablespoons finely grated fresh ginger
2 teaspoons curry powder
¼ teaspoon ground cinnamon
3 cups low-sodium vegetable broth
1-14 ounce can no-salt-added diced tomatoes
½ pound collard greens, tough rib removed and discarded, leaves chopped
½ pound sweet potato, peeled, cut into 1-inch cubes (about 1 3/4 cups)
2 medium red bell peppers, chopped
14 ounces extra firm tofu
¼ cup natural-style peanut butter

Side of Brown rice
1 cup medium- or long-grain brown rice
2 cups water
1 teaspoon salt

Preparation:
1. Preheat the broiler on high.
2. On a sheet pan, toss the eggplant with 1 tablespoon of the oil and ½ teaspoon of the salt. Broil about 6 inches from the heat, stirring occasionally, until golden brown, 10 to 12 minutes.
3. Heat the remaining 2 tablespoons oil in a large, heavy pot, over medium heat. Add the onions and cook, stirring, until softened, about 5 minutes. Add the garlic, ginger, curry powder, the remaining ½ teaspoon salt, and the cinnamon, and cook, stirring for 1 minute
4. Stir in the broth, tomatoes with their juices, collard greens, sweet potatoes, bell peppers, and broiled eggplant and bring to boil. Lower the heat to medium-low and simmer, covered, until the vegetables are tender, about 15 minutes.
5. Meanwhile, place the tofu on a cutting board and slice it into small strips or cubes (no thinner than a half-inch) with a knife.
6. Add the tofu and allow the stew to continue simmering for another 10 minutes. Stir the soup gently from this point forward to avoid breaking the tofu into smaller chunks.
7. Stir in the peanut butter and simmer until it is incorporated, 3 minutes. The stew may be refrigerated or frozen at this stage. Serve garnished with the chopped peanuts.

Preparation for Side of Brown Rice
1. Place the rice in a large strainer or colander and rinse it thoroughly under cool water.
2. In a pot, combine the rice and water. Stir in a teaspoon of salt.
3. Bring to a boil, then reduce heat to low and cover. Cook for 45 minutes. Do not uncover the pot to check the rice during cooking.
4. Turn off the heat, and let the rice sit in the covered pot for another 10 to 15 minutes.
5. Fluff and serve

Note: tofu needs to be well drained of water (wrap in several changes of kitchen paper towel). Think of tofu as a sponge. It needs to be dried to soak up all the lovely flavors of the sauce.