CRISP-FRIED BEAN SPROUTS

MAKES
4 TO 6 SERVINGS

TIME
30 MINUTES

Bean sprouts take well to frying. Here they are lightly coated with a batter and gently stirred in hot oil. If some stick together, fine; if not, that's good too. What you get is something akin to shoestring French fries. This is good without the garnishes, terrific with them; you could also serve it as lettuce wraps, rolled in leaves of Bibb or green leaf lettuce.

INGREDIENTS

Peanut or good-quality vegetable oil for deep frying
1 pound bean sprouts (about 4 cups), rinsed and drained well
1/4 cup soy sauce
2 cups all-purpose flour, rice flour, or cornstarch
Salt and pepper
1 cup chopped roasted peanuts for garnish (optional)
1 cup chopped fresh cilantro for garnish (optional)
Minced fresh chile (like jalapeño or Thai), red chile flakes, or cayenne to taste for garnish (optional)
Lime wedges for garnish (optional)

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Put at least 2 inches oil in a deep, heavy saucepan over medium-high heat; bring to about 350°F on a deep-frying thermometer. Cover a plate with paper towels, a clean kitchen towel, or brown paper.

2. While the oil is heating, put the bean sprouts in a large bowl, drizzle the soy sauce over them, and toss gently to moisten all. Add the flour, a few spoonfuls at a time, and toss until the sprouts are evenly coated.

3. When the oil is hot, add about 1 cup or so of the bean sprouts. Turn and stir them occasionally with a slotted spoon until crisp and golden on all sides, 3 to 5 minutes. Transfer to the plate to drain. Sprinkle with salt and lots of black pepper while hot.
Repeat until all the sprouts are done. Serve immediately, garnished with the peanuts, cilantro, chile, and/or lime wedges as you like.

*Recipe from How to Cook Everything Vegetarian*