

## Replacing Mr. Peanut

by Neola Young

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**Correction appended: Please consult a physician before adding almonds to your diet, as people with peanut allergies commonly have a tree nut allergy, which includes almonds.**

In the past few years, Americans have seen a surprising number of food contamination incidents. Most recently, 46 states reported the appearance of salmonella in peanut products, which was followed by a massive recall of baked goods, dressings, ice cream and pet food products, to name a few. The FDA has a current list of more than 2,000 products, which tainted peanuts from the Peanut Corporation of America in Blakely, Ga adversely affected. With this information in hand, I began thinking about all the delicious ways I use peanut butter in baking or when concocting salad dressings or sauces for sauteed vegetables. How could I get by without using this rich, flavorful nut? Then the obvious solution came to mind: almonds.

You can use almonds in every way as peanuts, whether making a paste for almond butter or using the oil to cook or infuse a dish. I have often used almond flour when baking for my gluten-intolerant friends, too. It gives everything a nice little kick that peanuts often don't, and for people who like a certain nuttiness in dishes, it's a great replacement, especially now that there has been such a considerable warning against peanuts.

Almonds also offer great health benefits. For years, informed folks have taught us that peanuts are a great alternative protein. However, almonds contain as much protein and are high in monosaturated fat, also known as the good stuff. They are also a source of vitamin E, which encourages shiny nails and hair. So, rather than seeking a supplement, consider adding more almonds to your diet. They are an easy addition to salads, and many brands produce "bold flavor" almonds that are delicious enhancements to lettuces.

So where do you start with using almonds other than throwing a few into your greens? I first began adding toasted slivered almonds to steamed green beans, giving the dish a subtle nutty flavor and a slight crunch. Another simple way to cook with almonds is by using the paste for macaroons and my favorite way-for the basis of tarts. One of my favorite culinary adventures involves a tart made of almond paste, softly baked pears and rosemary infused chocolate. But that is a recipe for another time.

While at heart I am a baker, I also have a few entree staples of which I am particularly fond. One of these is a modified Thai-style rice and vegetables dish. I usually use peanut butter for the sauce, but almond butter is a splendid replacement, especially when combined with the other ingredients.

For this dish, remember that when it comes to vegetables, fresher is better. Also, this recipe includes tofu, but you could use any protein you like and it would taste delicious. I usually marinate my drained and cubed tofu in Bragg's Liquid Aminos (or soy sauce), lime juice and minced garlic for a couple of hours in the fridge beforehand. That's really the only prep work you need to do before throwing everything into the pan. The one thing that brings the entire dish together, though, is the spicy almond sauce. It makes the whole experience seem richer than it actually is, knowing that you are giving yourself a healthy alternative to heavy meals that aren't as heart-healthy as this one is.

### Thai-style Rice and Veggies

- 1 teaspoon sesame oil**
- 1 cup brown rice**
- 2 cups water**
- 1 tablespoon mild oil (canola or safflower)**
- 1 cup chopped sweet onion**
- 3 garlic cloves, minced**
- 1 cup chopped carrots**
- 2 cups roughly chopped green beans**
- 2 cups broccoli pieces**
- Bunch of cilantro**
- 1 package marinated and cubed tofu (see story)**
- 2 heaping tablespoons almond butter**
- 8 ounces coconut milk**
- 1/4 cup Bragg's Liquid Aminos or soy sauce**
- Sriracha chili sauce, to taste**

## Salt

Prepare rice according to directions on the packaging. I always begin by heating sesame oil and lightly coating and toasting rice before adding the liquid. While it cooks, heat oil on medium-high heat in a large skillet or wok. Add minced garlic and onions and cook until onions start to become clear. Add beans, carrots and broccoli, constantly stirring to coat, and add a pinch or two of salt. Add a tablespoon of water and cover for 2 minutes to lightly steam broccoli and beans, reducing heat to medium. Empty pan into a large bowl or dish. Add more oil as need to cook tofu.

Empty container of tofu into heated oil, turning on all sides until lightly golden brown. Add tofu to bowl. Remember to check your rice.

For the sauce, add almond butter, coconut milk, Aminos (or soy sauce) and sriracha (a little goes a long way) to a small saucepan over medium heat. While constantly stirring, reduce heat to low until you have a smooth sauce. Remove from heat and either toss with veggies and tofu or leave aside as a condiment.

I haven't tried mixing almond butter with coconut milk in a sauce before. Sounds good. I love nuts in cooking. Why just this morning I had oatmeal topped with toasted walnuts and freshly cooked apples chunked with cinnamon. Yum.

## Race Leaves Mark in Mayoral Race

**Iadd:** I would also attribute that apathy, as I did before the primary, to the crap that too often passes as political discourse in Jackson. It's just rumor after rumor, and game after game. ...

## Race Leaves Mark in Mayoral Race

**Tom Head:** I think simple name recognition is also a factor. Harvey Johnson benefits from strong citywide name recognition because he served two terms as mayor; but outside of Ward 6, Crisler ...

## Race Leaves Mark in Mayoral Race

**Iadd:** Wow. I hadn't seen that. I'm printing and taking home to read this weekend. Thanks, WMartin! I wonder if he gets into the question of the reaction when whites wholeheartedly support a ...

## Race Leaves Mark in Mayoral Race

**WMartin:** I'm interested in seeing how Mayor Johnson originally fared in his first race. I found this [political science paper](#) about that first race that Johnson won. It basically seeks to ...

## Race Leaves Mark in Mayoral Race

**Ironghost:** I think it's going to come down to two things. 1. Melton's last gasp: Who inherits his voters? 2. Who John Horhn endorses. Melton did pull 5k people who still wanted to give him ...

## May 14 Mayoral Debate at JSU: Crisler v. Johnson

**News Junkie:** "Candidates will be be provided questions in advance. Only the moderators will know the questions going into the debate." That must be a typo.

## Mississippian Nominated to Oversee Forest Service

**baquan2000:** I grow tired of this black/white who has what job. I know plenty of whites and blacks that dig ditches together, paint houses, and build state wide computer ...

## About the Author

Schools' peanut bans spark backlash - Back to School

Peanut Butter Allergy - Marijuana.com

Nanny fed nut allergy toddler a peanut butter sandwich, court told

Relevance of casual contact with peanut butter in children with

Afraid of or allergic to peanut butter? Here's a scrumptious

Allergy Alert on Undeclared Peanut Butter in Prestige Caramel

Allergie peanut ang

Peanut Butter Allergy

Peanut Butter Allergy - SheKnows Message Boards

Kid's Peanut Butter Allergy T-Shirt - CafePress

Source: <http://productsherbal.com>