

Recipe of the Month

Hearty Lentil Stew

Ingredients:

- 1 medium yellow onion
 - 2 large carrots
 - 2 celery ribs
 - 4 large garlic cloves
 - 2 tablespoons olive oil
 - 1 1/2 tablespoons smoked paprika
 - 1/2 teaspoon cumin
 - 1/2 teaspoon fennel seeds (optional)
 - 1 1/2 cups brown or green lentils
 - 28-ounce can crushed fire roasted tomatoes (or highest quality canned tomatoes)*
 - 1 quart vegetable broth
 - 1 teaspoon kosher salt
 - 3 cups baby spinach (or chopped standard spinach, kale or chard)
- For the garnish: Parmesan cheese (recommended)



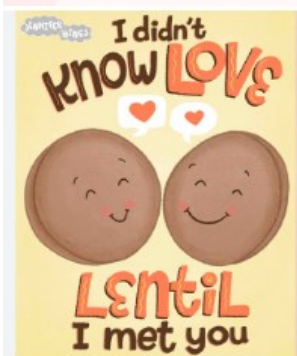
Instructions:

1. Finely dice the onion. Peel and finely chop the carrots. Chop the celery into small pieces. Mince the garlic.
2. In a large pot, add the olive oil and heat over medium heat. Add the onion, carrot, celery and garlic and cook 3 to 4 minutes until just translucent. Add the smoked paprika, cumin, fennel seeds, and lentils and stir 1 minute. Add the canned tomatoes and their juices, vegetable broth, and kosher salt.
3. Bring to a simmer. Simmer covered, stirring occasionally, for 20 minutes. Remove lid and cook for an additional 10 to 15 minutes until the lentils are tender. Stir in the spinach in the last minute or so and cook until it wilts (if using kale or chard, add it in the last 5 minutes).
4. Remove from the heat. Taste and season with additional salt and fresh ground pepper as necessary. For best flavor, garnish with Parmesan cheese. Store refrigerated for up to 4 days and frozen for 3 to 4 months.

Food Focus

Lentils

Lentils are a great heart healthy food! They are packed with B vitamins, magnesium, zinc, and potassium. They are an excellent meat alternative and a great source of iron! Lentils are a great source of health-promoting polyphenols, which have strong antioxidant and anti-inflammatory properties. They grow in pods, and usually with 2 seeds in each. Lentils don't just taste great, they've been enjoyed by our ancestors all the way back to Neolithic times.



Feature



Heart disease is a very preventable disease, and yet it is still the leading cause of death in America. Fortunately, you can control many risk factors with a healthy diet and regular exercise.

-Make healthy food choices-aim to fill half your plate with fruits and vegetables. Legumes including beans and lentils are great sources of fiber and also pack a punch of protein, not to mention they are cost effective too! Reduce salt intake by selecting no salt seasoning.

-Studies have shown that yoga is effective in slowing down your heart rate, which can help lower your blood pressure.

-Laughing may increase overall health. Research suggests a good laugh can increase your blood flow by 20%. The positive effects of this can last for 24 hours.

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