

Lentil Soup, Hearty Lentil Soup with Fragrant Spices

Source: Cook's Illustrated, p. 87

Ingredients

- 3 slices bacon
- 1 large onion, chopped fine
- 2 large carrots, peeled and chopped
- 3 cloves garlic, minced
- 1 (14.5 oz) can diced tomatoes, drained
- 1 bay leaf
- 1 tsp fresh thyme leaves
- 1 tsp ground cumin
- 1 tsp ground coriander
- 1 tsp ground cinnamon
- ¼ tsp cayenne pepper
- 7 oz (1 cup) lentils, picked over and rinsed
- 1 tsp salt
- pepper
- ½ cup dry white wine
- 4½ cups low-sodium chicken broth
- 1½ cups water
- 1½ tsp lemon juice
- 3 tbsp minced cilantro

Method

1. Cook the bacon in a Dutch oven over medium-high heat, stirring occasionally, until the bacon is crisp, about 5 minutes. Add the onion and carrots and cook, stirring occasionally, until the vegetables begin to soften, about 2 minutes. Add the garlic, cumin, coriander, cinnamon, and cayenne and cook until fragrant, about 30 seconds. Stir in the tomatoes, bay leaf, and thyme and cook until fragrant, about 30 seconds. Stir in the lentils and salt and season with pepper to taste. Cover, reduce the heat to medium-low, and cook until the vegetables are softened and the lentils have darkened, 8 to 10 minutes.
2. Uncover, increase the heat to high, add the wine, and bring to a simmer. Add the chicken broth and water, bring to a boil, cover partially, and reduce the heat to low. Simmer until the lentils are tender but still hold their shape, 30 to 35 minutes.
3. Remove the bay leaf from the pot and discard. Puree 3 cups of the soup in a blender until smooth, then return to the pot. Stir in the lemon juice and heat the soup over medium-low heat until hot, about 5 minutes. Stir in 2 tbsp of the cilantro and serve, garnishing each bowl with the remaining cilantro. A dollop of sour cream is a great addition, too.

Notes

I typed the cumin, coriander, cinnamon, and cayenne in the wrong order in the ingredients list — they go in with the garlic. This sometimes throws me off. Doesn't take much!