

Red Lentil Soup with Lemon + Spinach

Makes 7 cups

This is a classic chunky soup that is naturally thickened with lentils. The variety of spices and the fresh lemon at the end take a typically plain soup and make it really flavorful. This soup would be ideal during the soft food stage of healing.

Directions

In a large, heavy pot heat the olive oil over high heat. Add the onions and garlic and sauté until they begin to caramelize, turning a golden brown.

Turn the heat down to medium and add the spices: cumin, paprika, and chili powder. Stir for two minutes longer to toast the spices. Add the tomato paste. Stirring constantly, let it brown a little bit. This helps to develop a deep flavor.

Add the salt, pepper, carrots, lentils and broth. Bring to a simmer, then partially cover the pot and turn the heat down to medium-low. Simmer until the lentils are soft, about 30 minutes.

The soup can be eaten chunky just like this or you can put 1/3 of the soup in a blender and purée it smooth before adding it back to the soup pot. This makes a nice soup consistency that is smooth with chunks.

Lastly, add in the lemon zest and juice, fresh cilantro and spinach. The heat from the soup will wilt the spinach.

Note on freezing: This freezes great. When you are warming it back up it will have thickened considerably. Add a little water or broth to bring it back to a soup texture. ■

Ingredients

3 tablespoons olive oil

1 large onion, small diced (3 cups)

4 garlic cloves, minced

3 tablespoons tomato paste

1 teaspoon ground cumin

1 teaspoon smoked sweet paprika

1/4 teaspoon ground chili powder

2 teaspoons salt

1/2 teaspoon ground black pepper

2 large carrots, small diced – about 2 cups

1 cup red lentils, picked over and rinsed

6 cups chicken or vegetable broth

Zest and juice of one lemon

1/4 cup chopped fresh cilantro, tightly packed

2 large handfuls chopped spinach leaves (optional)

Garnish: Dollop of plain yogurt or sour cream