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Ethiopian-Style Red Lentil and Okra in a Spicy Tomato Sauce

Ingredients:

- 1 cup dried red lentils
- 5 cups water
- 2 tablespoons olive oil
- 1 red onion, diced
- 2 cloves garlic, minced or crushed
- 1-inch fresh ginger, grated or minced
- 1 1/2 cups fresh or frozen okra, sliced into 1/2-inch pieces
- 1 large tomato, diced
- 1/2 teaspoon ground cumin
- 1/2 teaspoon ground cinnamon
- 1/4 teaspoon ground nutmeg
- 1/4 teaspoon ground cardamon
- 1/8 teaspoon ground cloves
- 3 tablespoons berbere powder
- 1 tablespoon paprika
- 1 teaspoon sea salt, or to taste
- fresh cracked black pepper, to taste

Instructions:

1. Rinse the lentils and add to a large heavy-bottomed saucepan. Pour in the water and bring to a boil over high heat. Reduce heat to medium and simmer, uncovered, for 10 minutes or until the lentils are cooked but still retain some firmness. Drain, reserving the cooking liquid, and set aside.
2. Wipe the saucepan dry. Add the oil and heat over medium-high heat. When hot, add the onion and sauté for 5 minutes or until softened and slightly browned on the edges. Toss in the garlic and ginger and stir for another minute.
3. Add the okra, tomato, cumin, cinnamon, nutmeg, cardamon and cloves, and stir well to combine. Reduce the heat to medium, cover, and simmer for about 10 minutes, stirring often, until the okra has started to soften. Stir in the berbere and paprika, increase the heat to high and add 2 cups of the reserved lentil cooking liquid. Bring to a boil, reduce heat to medium-low, cover, and simmer, stirring often, until the orka is tender, about 10 more minutes.
4. Stir in the lentils and a bit more of the reserved cooking liquid if necessary to thin the sauce. Cover and simmer for 5 to 8 minutes, stirring occasionally, until the sauce has thickened. Season with sea salt and black pepper.

Carrot and Lentil Soup

Ingredients

- 2 tbsp olive oil
- 2 red onions, diced
- 2 celery sticks, diced
- 2 large carrots, peeled and diced
- 2 garlic cloves, finely chopped
- 30g/1oz fresh root ginger, peeled and finely chopped
- 1 tsp sea salt
- 15g/½oz fresh coriander (leaves and stalks), washed and finely chopped
- 1 tsp ground turmeric
- 1 tsp caraway seeds
- 1 tsp ground cardamom seeds
- 200g/7oz red lentils
- 225g/8oz baby spinach, washed
- salt and freshly ground black pepper

To serve

- 4 tbsp plain yoghurt (or plant-based yoghurt)
- 1 lime, finely grated zest and juice

Method

1. Heat the oil in a saucepan over a medium heat, then add the onion, celery, carrot, garlic, ginger and salt. Fry for 15 minutes, stirring often, until the vegetables are glossy and translucent.
2. Stir in the coriander, turmeric, caraway and cardamom and cook for 1 minute. Add the lentils and 1.5 litres/2¾ pints water.
3. Slowly bring the soup to a gentle simmer and cook for 10 minutes, or until the lentils have softened.
4. Stir in the spinach and cook until it wilts, then add a few grinds of black pepper. Season with more salt and pepper if desired.
5. Serve in bowls with a spoonful of yoghurt, a sprinkle of lime zest and a squeeze of lime juice.

Easy Mushroom Stroganoff

Ingredients

- 1 tbsp olive oil
- 1 onion, finely diced
- 2 garlic cloves, crushed
- 500g/1lb 2oz mushrooms (such as white closed cup), cleaned and sliced
- ½ tsp English mustard
- 1 tsp paprika
- 250ml/9fl oz vegetable stock, made from stock cube
- 200g/7oz rice
- 200ml/7fl oz soured cream
- 1 lemon, cut into six wedges
- salt and black pepper

Method

1. Heat a frying pan or wide saucepan over a medium heat and add the oil. Once hot, add the onion along with a pinch of salt and cook the onion gently for 5-7 minutes or until soft.
2. Add the garlic to the pan and continue to cook for 2 minutes, then add the sliced mushrooms. Continue to cook gently for a 5-6 minutes, or until the mushrooms are tender and golden-brown.
3. Add the mustard and paprika and mix well so that everything is coated. Add the stock, stirring as you pour it. Simmer gently for 5 minutes while you cook the rice.
4. Cook the rice according to the packet instructions in a separate saucepan until tender.
5. Once the rice is cooked, remove the mushrooms from the heat, stir in the soured cream along with the juice of two lemon wedges and mix it all together. Taste and add salt and pepper as needed. Serve the stroganoff with the rice and the remaining wedges of lemon on the side.

Vegetable Thai Curry

Ingredients

- 1 tbsp olive oil
- 50g/1¾oz Thai curry paste (green or red)
- 750g/1lb 10oz mixed root vegetables (such as carrot, swede, turnip), peeled and chopped
- 160ml/5½fl oz coconut cream (or 75g/2½oz creamed coconut, broken into pieces)
- 750ml/1¼ pint vegetable stock, made from stock cube
- 200g/7oz rice
- salt and black pepper

Method

1. Heat a large non-stick saucepan with a lid over a medium heat. Add the oil and curry paste and stir over the heat for two minutes until you can smell the flavours.
2. Mix in the chopped root vegetables and stir, coating the vegetables in the paste. Add a splash of water to help steam the vegetables and stop them from sticking. Place the lid on the saucepan and cook for 10 minutes, stirring every couple of minutes. Add a splash more water if needed to stop them sticking to the bottom of the pan.
3. Meanwhile, in a jug, mix the coconut and stock, stirring until dissolved.
4. Once the vegetables have cooked for 10 minutes, pour the stock and coconut mixture over the top and leave to simmer uncovered for 30 minutes, or until all the vegetables are soft and breaking up slightly and the sauce has thickened. If the sauce hasn't thickened enough to your liking, then turn up the heat and allow it to bubble away for a further 10 minutes, or until thickened. Add salt and pepper to taste.
5. Meanwhile, cook the rice in a separate saucepan according to the packet instructions. Serve the curry on top of the rice.

Slow cooker dal

Ingredients

- 300g/10½oz yellow split peas
- 1 onion, chopped
- 200g/7oz chopped tomatoes (from a tin or fresh)
- thumb of fresh root ginger, finely grated
- 2 tsp cumin seeds, 1 tsp crushed finely in a mortar
- 2 tsp ground turmeric
- 2 garlic cloves, one crushed, one thinly sliced
- 10 freeze-dried curry leaves
- 700ml/1¼ pts hot vegetable stock
- 1 hot green finger chilli, thinly sliced
- 2 tbsp vegetable or sunflower oil
- lemon wedges, to serve

Preparation method

1. Place the split peas, onion, tomatoes, ginger, ground cumin, turmeric, crushed garlic, curry leaves and stock into a slow cooker. Add most of the chilli and stir to combine. Cook on high for four hours, until the split peas are tender.
1. Season the dal generously with salt and freshly ground black pepper. Just before serving, heat the oil in a saucepan. When the oil is very hot, add the whole cumin seeds and the sliced garlic. Fry until the garlic is golden-brown and the cumin smells toasty and almost smoky. Spoon the hot spiced oil over the dhal, scatter with the remaining green chilli, then serve with lemon wedges for squeezing.