Lentil Sloppy Joe Rolls

4 generously filled rolls, one per person; knife and fork useful · Active 25 min · Total 1 hr

Skills: Cooking split lentils to tenderness and reducing a spoonable sandwich filling

Ingredients

- 1 tablespoon neutral oil (15 ml)
- 1 medium onion, finely chopped (150 g)
- 1 medium carrot, finely grated (100 g prepared)
- 2/3 cup split red lentils (120 g), rinsed and checked
- 1 1/2 cups water (360 ml), plus up to 1/2 cup/120 ml if the lentils need longer
- 1 can chopped tomatoes, 14–14 1/2 oz/400–411 g, including juice
- 1 teaspoon sweet or smoked paprika (2 g)
- 2 teaspoons granulated sugar (8 g)
- 1 tablespoon cider or plain food vinegar (15 ml)
- 1/2 teaspoon fine salt (3 g)
- 1/4 teaspoon ground black pepper (0.5 g)
- 4 large plain bread rolls, about 4 1/2 inches/11 cm across (320 g total)

Set out

Wide saucepan or deep skillet, at least 3 qt/3 L, Strainer, Wooden spoon, Knife and board, Optional dry skillet for toasting bread

Allergens

wheat. Check labels and substitutions.

Make it

1. Heat oil over medium heat. Cook onion and grated carrot for 7–8 minutes, stirring, until softened. Add rinsed lentils and 360 ml water.

2. Bring to a simmer, partly cover and cook for 15–20 minutes until lentils are tender and begin breaking down. Stir occasionally. If they are still firm and the pan is drying, add extra water a few tablespoons at a time and continue until tender.

3. Stir in tomatoes with juice, paprika, sugar, vinegar, salt and pepper. Simmer uncovered for 10–15 minutes, stirring often, until thick enough that a spoon leaves a brief path through the filling. Keep the base from catching.

4. Stand off the heat for 3 minutes. Split the rolls and toast their cut faces in a dry skillet if wanted. Divide all the filling among the four lower halves, add the tops and serve with a knife and fork if needed. Keep any portions for later as separate filling and bread.

Bread size changes the way it eats

The stated four broad rolls suit the full filling. If the bread available is much smaller, use more pieces and still divide the complete food into four meal portions.

Ingredient labels

Bread rolls supply wheat and may also contain milk, egg, soy or sesame. Read their actual labels. The curry-powder variation can introduce mustard or other blend ingredients.

A useful detail

The 60-minute total includes the plain-water lentil stage and a separate tomato reduction. A packet with a longer lentil cooking time needs that extra time; do not add tomato while the centers are still chalky.

Keep it well

Refrigerate filling in shallow portions within 2 hours, or 1 hour above 90°F/32°C, at 40°F/4°C or below and use within 3 days. Reheat a portion to 165°F/74°C, stirring with a little water if necessary. Freeze promptly cooled filling for up to 2 months and thaw in the refrigerator. Keep rolls separately according to their package; assemble only the portion wanted.