Green Lentil Mushroom Gravy

Four potato-and-gravy plates; one-quarter of the mash and lentil sauce per person · Active 30 min · Total 1 hr 5 min

Skills: Cooking whole lentils separately and making a simple measured flour gravy

Ingredients

• 3/4 cup dry whole green lentils (150 g), rinsed and checked

• 2 1/2 cups water for lentils (600 ml), plus up to 1/2 cup/120 ml if needed

• 1 3/4 lb potatoes, peeled if needed and cut into 1-inch/2.5 cm chunks (800 g prepared)

• About 6 cups water for potatoes (1.5 L), enough to cover

• 2 tablespoons olive or neutral oil (30 ml), divided

• 1 medium onion, finely chopped (150 g)

• 2 small cans plain sliced mushrooms, about 6 1/2 oz/184 g net each, drained to about 8 oz/230 g total

• 2 tablespoons all-purpose flour (16 g)

• 1/2 teaspoon dried thyme (0.5 g)

• 1 1/2 cups water for gravy (360 ml)

• 1/2 teaspoon fine salt (3 g), divided

• 1/4 teaspoon black pepper (0.5 g)

• Up to 1/2 cup potato cooking water (120 ml), reserved from the potato pan

Set out

Saucepan for lentils, at least 2 qt/2 L, Second saucepan for potatoes, at least 3 qt/3 L, Wide skillet, at least 3 qt/3 L, Strainer, Measuring jug, Potato masher, Spoon

Allergens

wheat. Check labels and substitutions.

Make it

1. Put lentils and 600 ml lentil water in their saucepan. Bring to a boil, then simmer partly covered for 25–35 minutes, or the packet time, until tender without a chalky center. Add extra water in small amounts if needed before tender; drain any excess afterward.

2. Meanwhile put potato chunks in the other saucepan with enough water to cover. Bring to a boil and simmer for 15–20 minutes until tender. Reserve 120 ml cooking water, drain and mash with 1 tablespoon oil and half the salt, adding the reserved water gradually only as needed for a soft mash. Keep covered briefly while the gravy finishes.

3. Heat the remaining oil in the skillet over medium-high heat. Cook onion and drained mushrooms for 10–12 minutes, stirring occasionally, until excess liquid evaporates and edges begin to color. Lower heat, add flour and thyme and stir for 1 minute.

4. Add the 360 ml gravy water gradually, stirring across the base. Bring to gentle bubbling and cook for 3–4 minutes until thickened. Fold in the tender drained lentils, remaining salt and pepper and simmer for 3–5 minutes. If too thick, add a tablespoon of plain water; it should be a gravy rather than dry lentils.

5. Divide mash and all the mushroom-lentil gravy among 4 plates. Cool any later portions promptly in shallow containers rather than leaving the two pans warm on the stove.

Green Lentil Mushroom Gravy

Four potato-and-gravy plates; one-quarter of the mash and lentil sauce per person · Active 30 min · Total 1 hr 5 min

Skills: Cooking whole lentils separately and making a simple measured flour gravy

Do not discard the useful water too early

Put the measuring jug beside the potato pan before draining. It is easier to reserve the small amount for the mash than to guess at a replacement afterward.

Ingredient labels

The measured flour thickener is wheat. Check canned mushroom and lentil packages for added ingredients. The base uses water and oil rather than milk or butter.

A useful detail

Lentils, potatoes and gravy overlap in the 65-minute timetable. If using fewer burners, allow extra elapsed time and keep the already cooked parts safely hot or chill them promptly instead of holding lukewarm.

Keep it well

Refrigerate mash and gravy in shallow portions within 2 hours, or 1 hour above 90°F/32°C, at 40°F/4°C or below for up to 3 days. Reheat a portion to 165°F/74°C throughout, stirring with a little water. Freeze promptly cooled portions for up to 2 months; thaw in the refrigerator. Potatoes may be softer or slightly grainier after freezing.