Carrot Parsnip and Red Lentil Hotdish

One 8×12 in (20×30 cm) dish, at least 3 qt/2.8 L;4 main-dish portions · Active 35 min · Total 1 hr 40 min

Ingredients

- 1 tablespoon olive oil (15 ml), for filling
- 1 medium onion, chopped (150 g)
- 2 garlic cloves, finely chopped (6 g)
- 12 oz carrots, peeled and cut in 3/8-in/1-cm cubes (350 g prepared)
- 10 oz parsnips, peeled and cut in 3/8-in/1-cm cubes (300 g prepared)
- Scant 1 cup split red lentils, rinsed (180 g)
- 2 1/2 cups low-sodium vegetable stock (600 ml)
- 3/4 cup plus 1 tablespoon plain passata (200 ml)
- Up to 1/2 cup hot water (120 ml), only if needed during simmering
- 1 teaspoon dried thyme
- 1/4 teaspoon fine salt (1.5 g)
- 1/4 teaspoon black pepper
- 1/2 cup plain rolled oats (40 g)
- 2 tablespoons unsalted sunflower kernels (20 g)
- 2 teaspoons olive oil (10 ml), for topping

Set out

Oven, 8×12 in (20×30 cm) baking dish, at least 3 qt/2.8 L, Heavy wide saucepan, at least 4 qt/3.8 L, Fine sieve, Small bowl, Rimmed baking sheet, Suitable foil if needed, Food thermometer

Allergens

Sunflower seeds, Oats: check for gluten cross-contact, Check stock labels; celery may be present. Check labels and substitutions.

Make it

1. Heat oven to 400°F (205°C). Put the dish on a rimmed sheet. Heat filling oil in the saucepan over medium-low heat. Soften onion 7–9 minutes, then add garlic 30 seconds. Stir in carrots and parsnips 2 minutes.

2. Add red lentils, stock, passata, thyme, salt and pepper. Bring to a gentle simmer and cook 25–35 minutes, stirring from the bottom regularly, until lentils have broken down and root cubes are tender to a knife. Add small splashes from the 120 ml hot-water reserve only if the pan is drying before the roots soften. The finished filling should be thick and spoonable, not stiff or soupy.

3. Spread hot filling in the dish. Mix oats, sunflower kernels and topping oil in the small bowl and scatter loosely over the surface.

4. Bake 20–25 minutes until oats and seeds are lightly golden and the center and several other spots reach 165°F (74°C). Shield loosely if seeds color early. Rest 5 minutes and serve four portions.

A soft lentil base is intentional

The named roots should remain visible, while the red lentils become part of the sauce. A picture of firm brown lentil beads would describe a different dish.

A useful detail

The 100-minute total allows careful root chopping, up to 35 minutes simmering, assembly, baking and rest. Test the carrot and parsnip pieces before baking; lentils dissolving into the sauce is expected, not evidence that every vegetable is ready.

Keep it well

Refrigerate shallow portions within 2 hours, or 1 hour above 90°F (32°C), at 40°F (4°C) or below. Use within 3 days or an earlier ingredient deadline. Reheat to 165°F (74°C), adding a small splash of water if the lentil base has thickened. Freeze promptly cooled portions for up to 2 months for quality and thaw in the refrigerator; topping softens.