Chickpea, Spinach and Lemon Stew

2 thick stew portions, with 40 g/1 1/2 oz soft bread per person | Active 16 min | Cook 14 min | Total 30 min

Ingredients

- 240 g (8 1/2 oz) canned ready-to-eat chickpeas, drained and rinsed
- 120 g (4 1/4 oz) fresh spinach leaves, washed, drained and roughly chopped, divided into two 60 g portions
- 150 g (5 1/3 oz) ripe tomato, cut into 1 cm/3/8 in pieces, juice retained
- 50 g (1 3/4 oz) peeled onion, finely chopped
- 3 g peeled garlic (about 1 small clove), minced
- 10 ml (2 tsp) olive oil
- 120 ml (1/2 cup) ready-to-use lower-sodium vegetable stock, divided
- 1 g ground cumin (about 1/2 tsp)
- 0.5 g fine salt, a small pinch, or omit if the stock is salty
- 15 ml lemon juice (1 tbsp), seeds removed
- 80 g (2 3/4 oz) soft whole-wheat bread, divided into two 40 g portions

Set out

1000 W microwave with turntable, Kitchen scale and measuring jug, Knife and board, Spoon, Oven mitts, Two serving bowls, Microwave-safe bowl, at least 2.5 L/about 2 2/3 US qt measured capacity, about 21 cm/8 1/4 in inside diameter and 10 cm/4 in deep, Microwave-safe vented cover, Can opener and sieve, Fork, Citrus juicer, Two side plates, Food thermometer for leftover reheating checks

Allergens

Wheat. Check labels and substitutions.

Make it

1. Put the onion, garlic, oil, cumin and 15 ml/1 tbsp of the measured stock in the 2.5 L bowl. Cover with a vent. Microwave at 1000 W full power for 3 minutes, stirring halfway, until the onion is softened.

2. Add the chickpeas, tomato with its juices, remaining 105 ml stock and salt. Stir, cover with a vent and heat at full power for 4-5 minutes, stirring after 2 minutes, until the tomato softens and the mixture is hot throughout.

3. Add one 60 g spinach portion, placing it loosely over the stew. Cover with a vent and microwave at full power for 2-3 minutes. Fold the leaves down into the hot mixture, then add the remaining 60 g spinach. Cover and heat for 2-3 minutes more, stirring halfway, until all leaves have wilted and the entire stew is steaming hot. If any leaves remain cool or stiff, use further stirred 30-second bursts.

4. Press a few chickpeas against the side with the fork if desired to thicken the small amount of broth. Stir in all the lemon juice. Stand covered for 2 minutes. Divide the full stew equally between two bowls and serve with the two 40 g soft bread portions.

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A small stock measure is intentional

This is a thick stew. Do not fill the bowl with extra stock before the spinach has released its moisture.

Prepare the leaves before heating

Keep washed, drained spinach ready in its two measured portions so the hot bean base does not wait through another preparation task.

Ingredient labels

Bread contains wheat/gluten and may contain sesame, soy or milk. Check stock and bread labels; no automatically allergen-free substitution is implied.

A useful detail

The 30-minute plan allows 9 minutes of preparation, up to 14 minutes of sequential heating, a 2-minute stand and 5 minutes for folding, thickening and portioning. The spinach additions are heated one after the other in the same 1000 W microwave, not in separate simultaneous bowls.

Another way

Replace the chickpeas with 240 g/8 1/2 oz drained ready-to-eat cannellini beans. Stir more gently because they break up easily.

Use 120 g/4 1/4 oz fresh baby kale with thick stems removed instead of spinach. Chop finely and extend the two leaf stages in 1-minute bursts until fully tender; the total can increase by 4-6 minutes.

Keep it well

Refrigerate shallow portions within 2 hours, or within 1 hour above 90°F/32°C, at 40°F/4°C or colder. Use within 3 days or an earlier opened-bean or stock deadline. Keep bread separate. Reheat the stew under a vented cover in short stirred bursts, stand 2 minutes and verify 165°F/74°C throughout before serving. Add 15 ml/1 tbsp water to a portion only if it has become too thick.