Red Lentil Soup with Yogurt Ribbons

2 large main-meal soup bowls, each with half the yogurt and 40 g bread · Active 25 min · Total 1 hr 5 min

Skills: Beginner with ordinary kitchen equipment

Ingredients

• About 2/3 cup dry split red lentils (120 g), sorted and rinsed

• 1 medium onion, finely diced (100 g)

• 2 small carrots, peeled and finely diced (150 g prepared)

• 2 medium tomatoes, diced (200 g)

• 2 garlic cloves, minced (6 g)

• 2 teaspoons olive oil (10 ml/about 9 g)

• 1/2 teaspoon ground cumin (1 g)

• 3 cups drinking water (700 ml), plus up to 150 ml if needed

• About 3/4 cup plus 1 tablespoon plain nonfat Greek yogurt (200 g)

• 1 tablespoon plus 1 teaspoon lemon juice (20 ml/about 20 g)

• 1/4 teaspoon fine salt (1.5 g)

• 1/8 teaspoon black pepper (0.3 g)

• 2 generous slices whole-wheat bread (80 g total)

Set out

3-litre/3-quart saucepan, Fine sieve, Wooden spoon, Small heatproof yogurt bowl, Knife and board, Kitchen scale, Ladle, 2 bowls, at least 900 ml capacity

Allergens

Milk, Wheat; check bread for soy, sesame or other allergens. Check labels and substitutions.

Make it

1. Heat oil in the saucepan over medium-low heat. Soften onion and carrot for 7–8 minutes, stirring. Add garlic and cumin and stir for 30 seconds.

2. Add the rinsed lentils and 700 ml water. Bring to a boil, reduce to a gentle simmer and cook partly covered for 20–25 minutes, or the packet requirement, stirring along the base, until the lentils are completely soft and breaking down. Add some of the extra water if the soup thickens before the lentils are tender.

3. Stir in the diced tomatoes and simmer gently for 5–8 minutes until they soften. Add lemon, salt and pepper. Put yogurt in the small bowl and gradually stir in 4 tablespoons/60 ml hot soup taken from the pot. Do not boil the yogurt mixture.

4. Divide the entire soup between 2 large bowls. Spoon half the warmed yogurt over each and draw it through in loose ribbons. Serve each with 40 g of the measured bread.

A useful kitchen skill

Use the natural breakdown of split lentils to thicken soup, then temper yogurt with a little hot liquid instead of boiling the cultured dairy.

A useful detail

The 65-minute total includes vegetable preparation, a complete lentil simmer and a separate tomato finish. Add tomato and lemon only after the lentils soften. The final volume is roughly 1.3–1.5 litres, varying with evaporation and water adjustment; divide the batch equally rather than assigning nutrition to a guessed ladle.

Keep it well

Refrigerate soup and reserved yogurt separately in shallow containers at 40°F/4°C or below within 2 hours, or 1 hour above 90°F/32°C. Use within 3 days or the shorter yogurt label. Reheat soup to 165°F/74°C throughout and add refrigerated yogurt only when serving. If already mixed, reheat gently while stirring to the same temperature.