

Best Lentil Soup

Prep: 15 minutes • Cook: 45 minutes

A bright, hearty lentil soup layered with smoky tomatoes, earthy cumin, and citrusy thyme, finished with tender greens and a tangy splash of white wine vinegar. Comforting yet vibrant, it's simple pantry cooking with remarkable depth.

Ingredients

- 2 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil
- 1 medium onion (chopped)
- 4 medium (2 cups) carrots (chopped)
- 2 stalks celery (chopped)
- 6 small or 3 large (8 cups) kale leaves (stems finely diced, leaves chopped)
- heaping 1/2 teaspoon ground cumin
- 1 1/2 teaspoons sea salt
- to taste black pepper (freshly ground)
- 4 cloves garlic (grated)
- 1 (14-ounce) can fire-roasted diced tomatoes
- 3/4 cup dry green lentils (rinsed)
- 2 tablespoons white wine vinegar
- 12 sprigs fresh thyme sprigs (bundled)
- 6 cups vegetable broth
- 1/2 cup fresh parsley (chopped, for garnish)
- to taste red pepper flakes
- to taste Parmesan cheese (grated, optional)

Instructions

1. Heat the olive oil in a large pot over medium heat. Add the onion, carrots, celery, finely diced kale stems, cumin, salt, and several grinds of pepper. Cook, stirring occasionally, until the vegetables begin to soften, about 8 minutes.
 2. Stir in the garlic, diced tomatoes, lentils, vinegar, thyme bundle, and vegetable broth. Cover and simmer gently for 25 to 30 minutes, or until the lentils are tender.
 3. Add the chopped kale leaves and cook until wilted, about 5 minutes. Remove and discard the thyme bundle; season to taste.
 4. Serve topped with parsley and red pepper flakes. Add grated Parmesan if desired, and enjoy with crusty bread.
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Tags: Soup, Vegetarian, Vegan Option, Weeknight, High Fiber, Comfort Food

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