

Lentil Soup *Dhal Sherva*

Today you will learn how to cook soup where a 'pulse' is the main ingredient – **the red lentil**.

Pulses, like red lentils, are a type of seed. As a result, they contain the proteins a new plant needs to start the process of germination and growth. This protein is good for humans too.

Lentils contain at least as much protein as meat and are, by weight, less than a third of the price to buy. Lentils also contain vitamins, minerals and fibre – all essential parts of a healthy diet. Unlike meat, lentils contain no unhealthy fats.

You can make this soup with other beans or pulses, such as chickpeas.

Today, you will also smell and taste some different curry spices and decide which one you would like to use in your soup. Curry powder is a mixture of spices which are ground up to make a very fine powder. Curry powder is usually a mixture of turmeric, chilli, coriander seeds, cumin seeds, ginger and pepper, and can be bought in mild, medium or hot strengths.

HOMEWORK for next week. CHOOSE ONE OF...

1. Find out about the **spices in curry powder** – where they are grown, what they look like before being ground up, where and how they are used. Make an eye-catching poster.

OR...

2. Find out about **lentils** – the different types, where they are grown, what they look like before they are dried, how they are used. Why and how they are eaten around the world. Make an eye-catching poster.

Ingredients

Large container
1tbspn veg oil
1 potato
1 large onion
2 cloves garlic
1 red or green chilli (you can replace this with chilli powder)
90g red lentils
300ml water
400g can chopped tomatoes
1 tbspn curry paste or powder
Half teaspoon each of sugar, salt and pepper to season.

OPTIONAL – 3-4 slices bacon
tbspn coconut milk or natural yoghurt
(stir in just before the soup is served)
This will reduce the spiciness of the soup and make it creamier.

Method

Cook the potato

1. Get a saucepan, lid, veg chopping board, knife, wooden spoon, bowl, sieve and measuring jug
2. Heat the saucepan pan, quarter filled with water to boiling point.
3. While the water is heating up, wash, peel and dice the potato into 1cm cubes.
4. Gently, add the potato to the water
5. Simmer for 10-15 minutes, or until the potato is soft to eat, but not falling apart.
6. *Go on to the next section while you are waiting for it to cook.*
7. When cooked, drain the potato into the sieve and set it aside in the bowl.
8. Wash and dry your saucepan – you will need it again

Prepare the onion, garlic and chilli

DO NOT RUB YOUR FACE OR EYES.

1. Peel and cut the onion into small pieces.
2. Peel and crush the garlic.
3. Now, be careful. Cut the stalk off the chilli.
4. Slice the chilli down its length.
5. Wash away the seeds.
6. Cut the chilli into very narrow strips.
7. Cut the strips into tiny pieces.
8. Wash your hands and rinse your knife.
9. OPTIONAL BACON – get a red chopping board. Cut any rind off the bacon. Cut the bacon into spoon-sized slices. Clear away meat packaging and wash your hands.

Soften and add spice

1. Get 300ml cold water in your measuring jug. Put it on one side, for later!
2. Put 1 tbspn veg oil in the pan.
3. Add 1 tbspn curry powder or spices.
4. Warm over a medium heat – (2 or 3).
5. Add the onion, garlic and chilli and bacon. Avoid touching the ingredients with your hands – use the knife to scrape the ingredients into the pan.
6. **Stir constantly to stop from sticking.**
7. Cook gently until the onion is transparent – 10-15 minutes.

Cook the lentils

1. Put the lentils in the sieve.
2. Rinse them well, under the cold tap to remove dust and husks.
3. Tip them into the pan and stir to coat them with the cooking juices.
4. Pour over the water
5. Turn up the heat.
6. Bring to simmer and put the lid on.
7. The lentils will now start to soak up the water and soften.
8. Cook until the water has been absorbed into the lentils. This will take 15-20 minutes. **YOU MUST KEEP AN EYE ON IT.**
9. When the water is almost all absorbed, take off the lid. The mixture will start to stick on the base of the pan and will need stirring. The more effort you put in, the easier the pan will be to wash up!
10. Test how soft the lentils are by squashing them against the inside of the pan. If they are not soft, add a little more water and cook for longer.
11. When soft, mash the lentils against the sides with the wooden spoon

Add the tomatoes, potatoes and seasoning.

1. Add half a teaspoon of salt
2. Add half a teaspoon of pepper
3. Add half a teaspoon of sugar.
4. Stir in the tomatoes and potatoes
5. Cook gently (at mark 1 or 2) for another 5 minutes to infuse the flavours.
6. Turn off the heat
7. Taste the dhal.
8. If you think it needs more spices, add them carefully and stir well.
9. Option - Add 1tablespoon of coconut milk or yoghurt.
10. Cool and put in your container.