

Red-Lentil Soup

yield: Makes 4 to 6 servings (makes 6 cups)

active time: 20 min

total time: 1 1/4 hr

Ingredients

- 1 large onion, chopped
- 1 tablespoon olive oil or grape seed oil
- 4 garlic cloves, finely chopped
- 1 teaspoon ground cumin
- 1 Turkish or 1/2 California bay leaf
- 1 sprig fresh thyme
- 1 cup red lentils (7 ounces), picked over and rinsed
- 3 1/2 cups reduced-sodium chicken broth or vegetable broth
- 2 1/2 cups water
- 2 tablespoons chopped flat-leaf parsley
- 1 stock celery, 1 carrot, 1/2 red pepper (all chopped)

Accompaniment: lemon wedges

Cook onion in oil with 1/2 teaspoon salt in a medium heavy saucepan over medium heat, stirring occasionally, until softened, about 8 minutes.

Add garlic, cumin, bay leaf, and thyme and cook, stirring, 1 minute more. Add lentils, broth, water, celery, carrot, red pepper, 1/2 teaspoon salt, and 1/2 teaspoon pepper and simmer, partially covered, stirring occasionally, until lentils are very soft and falling apart, about 30 to 45 minutes.

Discard bay leaf and thyme sprig, then purée 2 cups of mixture in blender (use caution when blending hot liquids) and return to pan.

Stir in parsley and season with salt.

Optional: season with paprika and season salt