

The Healthy Cook

Enjoy this simple, delicious, and amazingly versatile soup tonight. Then pack your bags. The recipe makes 9 cups, so you can be in Greece tomorrow, Mexico the day after, then India.

Simple Lentil Soup

Don't worry if you don't use all the soup. It freezes beautifully.



- ¼ cup extra-virgin olive oil
- 1 large onion, diced
- 2 carrots, diced
- 3 cloves garlic, minced
- 2 Tbs. tomato paste
- 2 bay leaves
- ½ lb. (1¼ cups) black, green, brown, or red lentils, or yellow split peas, rinsed and picked over
- 1 15 oz. can no-salt-added diced tomatoes
- 1½ tsp. kosher salt
- freshly ground black pepper, to taste

1. In a large heavy pot over medium heat, heat the oil until shimmering. Sauté the onion and carrots until lightly browned, 5–7 minutes. Stir in the garlic, tomato paste, and bay leaves. Cook, stirring, for 1 minute.
2. Stir in the lentils, tomatoes, and 5 cups water. Bring to a boil over high heat. Reduce the heat to medium-low and simmer, stirring occasionally, until the lentils are tender, 25–30 minutes (15–20 minutes for red lentils or yellow split peas). Remove and discard the bay leaves.
3. Optional: For a smoother consistency, purée some or all of the soup with a hand blender. (See the variations below.)
4. Season with the salt and pepper.

PER SERVING (1 cup): calories 170 | total fat 6 g | sat fat 1 g | carbs 22 g
fiber 4 g | total sugar 3 g | added sugar 0 g | protein 7 g | sodium 340 mg

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How to make the variations

Got leftover lentil soup? Jazz it up with these toppings. Each variation makes 4 servings.

Greek Lentil Soup

This variation is best when the soup is first made—still brothy and unpuéed.

Bring 3 cups of the basic soup to a simmer in a medium pot. Stir in 4 cups of baby spinach, kale, or arugula and ¼ cup minced fresh dill. Top each cup of soup with a pinch of lemon zest, a bit of dill, and a scattering of sliced scallions.

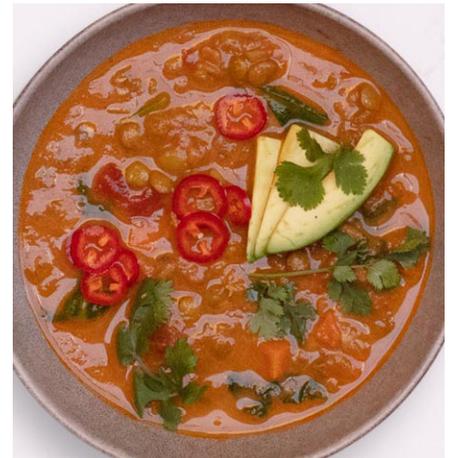
PER SERVING (1 cup soup + toppings): calories 140 | total fat 5 g | sat fat 0.5 g | carbs 19 g | fiber 5 g | total sugar 3 g | added sugar 0 g | protein 7 g | sodium 300 mg



Mexican Lentil Soup

Purée 2 cups of the basic soup in a blender with 1 chipotle in adobo or 1 tsp. chipotle powder. In a medium pot, bring the puréed soup plus 2 more cups of the basic soup to a simmer. Top each cup of soup with a few thin slices of fresh chile pepper (try jalapeño, fresno, or serrano), ⅛ of a sliced avocado, and a few fresh cilantro leaves.

PER SERVING (1 cup soup + toppings): calories 200 | total fat 9 g | sat fat 1 g | carbs 24 g | fiber 6 g | total sugar 4 g | added sugar 0 g | protein 8 g | sodium 380 mg



Greek Lentil Soup

Purée 4 cups of the basic soup in a blender with 1 serrano or jalapeño pepper. In a medium pot, bring the puréed soup to a simmer. In a small pan, gently heat 4 dried chiles (try Szechuan), 2 chopped cloves garlic, ½ tsp. smoked paprika, and ½ tsp. curry powder in 2 Tbs. olive oil until fragrant, 1–2 minutes. Top each cup of soup with one of the dried chiles, a few slivers of ginger, and a drizzle of the spiced oil.

PER SERVING (1 cup soup + toppings): calories 240 | total fat 13 g | sat fat 2 g | carbs 24 g | fiber 5 g | total sugar 4 g | added sugar 0 g | protein 7 g | sodium 350 mg

