

Red Lentil Soup

Ingredients:

4 Tbsp vegetable oil
1 onion, chopped
2 Tbsp fresh ginger, minced
1 jalapeño pepper, seeded and diced
3 cloves garlic, minced
3 Tbsp curry powder
1 ½ Tbsp cumin
1 ½ Tbsp turmeric
2 cups red lentils
3 ½ cups water
13 ounces coconut milk
14 ounces diced tomato (canned is fine)
½ bunch cilantro (optional)
salt and pepper to taste

Instructions:

Heat the oil in a skillet over medium-high heat. Add the onions, ginger, and jalapeño and cook, stirring occasionally until translucent, approximately 5 minutes. Add the garlic and cook an additional 2 minutes. Add 1 cup of water, the curry powder, cumin and turmeric and cook, stirring frequently until fragrant, approximately 2 minutes.

Rinse the lentils in a colander. Add the lentils to the skillet and stir to combine. Add the remaining water, coconut milk and tomatoes and bring to a boil. Reduce the heat to a simmer and cook until the lentils are soft, approximately 35-45 minutes. Add water if the mixture seems dry.

Season to taste with salt and pepper. Garnish with cilantro if you like.

Split Peas, Lentils & Dal



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About Split Peas, Lentils & Dal

Split peas, lentils, and dal are the quick-cooking members of the legume family, which also includes dried beans and peanuts. Unlike dried beans, they do not need to be soaked, but can be for improved digestibility and a shorter cooking time. Their mild flavor is great in comfort foods like soup or jazzed up with some Indian spices. For a quick and nutritious meal, these legumes are the perfect place to start.

About Legumes

Split peas, lentils, and dal have a mild, earthy flavor. Some varieties, like split peas, become very soft and creamy when cooked, and they're well-suited for soups. Other varieties, like French indigo lentils, remain firm and nutty when cooked.

Legumes are good for the whole family. They are a natural source of folic acid and iron. They also offer high protein for growing kids and active adults, as well as high fiber and magnesium for heart health and good circulation.

Store split peas, lentils, and dal in a cool, dry place such as a pantry or cupboard for up to 1 year.

Varieties in Bulk

Black-eyed Peas - These shiny white beans with the black markings are more closely related to beans than to peas, but like split peas, they do not need to soak overnight. They are a favorite in the South and are traditionally served on New Year's Day for good luck, along with collards or other greens, rice, ham hock, and cornbread. They have a mild, creamy flavor.

Green Split Peas - dried green peas that have been split in half for faster cooking; most commonly found in pea soup.

Green Lentils - lentils commonly found in the United States that have a brownish hue; they have a mild, understated flavor and a tendency to become mushy if overcooked.

Yellow Split Peas - The yellow variety of split peas; substitute them in recipes that call for green split peas

if you want a different color. Some people use them in Indian dal recipes that call for "chana dal" because their yellow color resembles chana dal (which is actually a relative of the chick pea that is split in half).

Red Lentils - These lentils are red when dry, but become a deep golden color when cooked. They are creamy and flavorful and most often used in Indian-style dal recipes.

French Indigo Lentils - These tiny dark lentils, originally grown in the Puy region of France, have a delicious, nutty flavor and can be substituted for common green lentils in most lentil recipes. Because they are firmer than other varieties of lentils, they can also be used in salads.

Autumn Lentil Blend - This is a colorful blend of five different lentil varieties, including French,

petite crimson, black beluga, Spanish pardina, and ivory white lentils. Don't overcook or the color will fade.

Mung Beans - commonly used in East Asian and Indian cooking. May be used in soups, purees or stuffed in breads. Some people choose to soak whole mung beans for 4-6 hours before cooking. Also good for sprouting.

Mung Dal - split mung beans, used in some Indian dal recipes. Use 4 cups of water per 1 cup of mung dal. Bring to boil before reducing to a simmer and cooking for about 20 minutes until tender. It is also used in kitchari. Kitchari, a cleansing Ayurvedic dish,

To make a colorful side dish, cook 1 part lentil blend with 2 parts chicken or vegetable broth for 45 minutes (add salt and pepper and a pat of butter at the end).

is made of grains and mung beans. Use 1 cup of beans per 4-6 cups of water. Boil uncovered for ten minutes before reducing to a simmer and cooking for 1-2 hours.

About Dal

The word "dal" comes from the Sanskrit word meaning "to split." In Indian cuisine, it refers both to the beans that have been split as well as to a fragrant, spiced soup made with these split beans that is found in many variations throughout India.

City Market carries a variety of legumes suitable for dal. You can make a dal with yellow split peas, red lentils, green lentils, or mung dal.

How to Cook Legumes

It's a good idea to check split peas, lentils, and dal for small stones that may have found their way in during the harvesting process (you can shake them around in the pot you're cooking them in). Then give them a good rinse in a strainer.

As a general rule, bring 3x the amount of water to boil along with the rinsed legumes, turning the heat down to a simmer. You can add onion, garlic, bay leaf, ginger, or spices at this point. Add a little more water for a thinner soup, less for a thicker stew or side dish.

Cook for about 30-45 minutes for legumes with a creamy consistency, or take off heat 5-10 minutes earlier for a firmer consistency or to use in salad

Black-eyed peas and split peas take a little longer to cook - about 1 hour; red lentils cook a little faster - about 20-25 minutes. While these legumes do not need to be pre-soaked like dried beans, you can choose to pre-soak them for improved digestibility and a shorter cooking time.

Seasoning & Serving

You can perk up the flavors of legumes towards the end of their cooking time by adding: sea salt, olive oil, a splash of vinegar, toasted sesame oil, tamari, miso, fresh lemon juice, fresh herbs, or pungent spices like chilies, garlic, or whole cumin seeds sautéed briefly in olive oil.