

Home on the Range

Lentils Maintain Popularity Through The Centuries

It seems only fitting that as we celebrate the end of a century, a centuries-old food is setting a new place for itself at the table. Lentils are reappearing in everything, from salsa and salads to soups and side dishes.

No wonder. These little legumes not only taste good, they're good for you. Packed with protein, vitamins, and minerals, lentils are high in fiber, low in fat, and cholesterol free.

Lentils are an economical and nutritional bargain. Lentils are easy to prepare and easy on the budget, too. The cost per pound of usable protein is much lower than meat and airy products.

Fiber facts, Here's a tasty way to get your daily dose of fiber: prepare a batch of lentil puree to have on hand for quick and easy dishes.

Season puree with chopped green chilies, minced onion, garlic, and cumin. Use as a filling for burritos and tacos, as a topping for quesadillas and nachos, or as a dip for corn chips and veggies.

No need to soak lentils prior to cooking. Just rinse, drain, and cook. In a saucepan, combine lentils and twice the amount of water. Cover; bring to a boil and simmer 10-20 minutes for salads; 20-30 minutes for vegetables and main dishes; 30-40 minutes for soups and purees.

LENTILS WITH VEGETABLES

- 1 cup lentils
- 1 large potato, diced
- 1 medium onion, diced
- 2 small yellow squash, cubed
- 1 pound spinach
- 3 tablespoons olive oil
- Salt
- Pepper
- 1/4 teaspoon allspice
- 1/4 teaspoon cloves
- Juice from 1-2 lemons

Brown onions in olive oil in 2-quart saucepan. Set onions aside. Add lentils and fill pan with water to one-inch above lentils. Cook until well done but still whole (approximately 30 minutes).

Add remaining ingredients except for the spinach and lemon juice. When vegetables are cooked, add spinach and cook until wilted. Add more seasoning if desired. Remove from heat and add lemon juice. Keep covered until served.

Bob Rumer
Jenkintown

SPICY RICE AND LENTILS

- 1/2 cup brown lentils soaked for 1 hour
- 1 large onion, finely chopped
- 1/2 teaspoon mashed garlic
- 1/2 teaspoon grated ginger
- 1 fresh green chili, seeded, chopped
- 4 tablespoons ghee or butter
- 1 cinnamon stick
- 2 cloves
- 1 bay leaf
- 1/2 teaspoon turmeric
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 1 cup long grain rice
- 1/2 cup red lentils, soaked one hour
- 2 tablespoons chopped spring onions

Drain brown lentils, cover with boiling water and boil 15 minutes until beginning to soften. Drain.

Cook onion, garlic, ginger, and chili in the ghee or butter until soft and light colored. Add cinnamon, cloves, bay leaf, and turmeric. Cook for 2 minutes, stirring.

Add drained rice and lentils, mix well, then add water to cover about one inch. Bring to boil, then cook on very low heat until liquid has been absorbed, about 20 minutes.

Stir in chopped spring onion. Remove cinnamon stick before serving.

Rob Rumer
Jenkintown

CHILI LENTILS

- 4 cups water
- 1 cup dried lentils
- 1 pound ground chuck
- 1 cup chopped onion
- 1 clove garlic, minced
- 28-ounce can tomatoes, cut up
- 1 tablespoon chili powder
- 1 teaspoon dried oregano leaves
- 1 teaspoon salt

Heat water in three-quart saucepan over high heat until it comes to a boil. Add lentils. Cover and simmer 30 minutes or until tender. Drain lentils in colander.

Cook ground chuck, onion, and garlic in 4-quart Dutch oven over medium heat until browned.

Stir in lentils, tomatoes, chili powder, oregano, and salt. Cook over high heat until mixture comes to a boil. Reduce heat to low. Cover and simmer one hour, stirring occasionally. Makes six servings.

Mildred Hess
Myerstown



Lentils not only taste good, but they're good for you. The centuries-old food remains a favorite in soup dishes but is also appearing in muffins, salads, and even pizza.

LENTILS WITH SPARERIBS

- 1 1/2 cups cooked lentils
- 1 bay leaf
- 1 onion, sliced
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 1/2 teaspoon pepper
- 1 1/2 pounds fresh spareribs

Soak lentils in two quarts water overnight. Add seasonings and simmer slowly about one hour. Transfer to a baking pan. Cut spareribs into portions of 2 or 3 ribs each and brown quickly in frying pan. Season with salt and pepper while browning. Arrange browned ribs on top of lentils and bake in 350 degree oven for 1 1/2 hours.

SHAMBURGERS

- 1 cup dry lentils
- 1/2 cup rice
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- Dash pepper
- 3 cups water
- 1 cup crushed bread crumbs
- 1 onion
- 1 egg

Bring lentils, rice, salt, pepper, and water to boil. Simmer 45 minutes; checking often to add more water if needed. Mash. Add bread crumbs, onion, and egg. Shape into patties. Fry. Serve on hamburger buns with ketchup.

Virginia Horning
Lancaster Co.

LENTIL LOAF

- 1 cup green lentils
- 1/2 cup barley
- 4 cups water
- 1 teaspoon sea salt
- 1 cup bread crumbs or cracker crumbs

1 clove garlic, minced
1 medium onion, minced
1 rib celery, sliced thinly
2 eggs, beaten
1/2 teaspoon nutmeg

Add lentils and barley to boiling salted water. Allow to boil for a minute, then reduce heat and simmer with lid ajar for about 40 minutes or until most of the water is absorbed. Remove from heat. Add bread or cracker crumbs along with remaining ingredients and mix well. Place mixture in a well-oiled 9x5x3-inch loaf pan. Bake at 350 degrees for 35 minutes. Allow to cool 15-20 minutes. Invert over a platter to serve.

Mildred Hess
Myerstown

LENTIL SOUP

- 1 cup dry lentils
- 5 cups water
- 2 cups tomato juice
- 1 or 2 bay leaves
- 6 sliced hot dogs or browned hamburgers
- 1 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 1/2 cup onion, chopped
- 1/2 cup celery, chopped
- 1/2 cup grated carrots

Combine ingredients and simmer until veggies are tender.

Ephrata Reader

Recipe Topics

If you have recipes for the topics listed below, please share them with us. We welcome your recipes, but ask that you include accurate measurements, a complete list of ingredients and clear instructions with each recipe you submit. Send your recipes to Lou Ann Good, Lancaster Farming, P.O. Box 609, Ephrata, PA 17522. Recipes should reach our office one week before publishing date.

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