

Lentil Soup

I have made this lentil soup many times. It's an old friend of mine. I have sautéed pancetta with the veggies and that was delicious. It is very easy to make a vegetarian or even vegan version by omitting the meat, Parmesan cheese rind and using vegetable broth instead of chicken. You can also add baby spinach with the basil at the end to up the health factor. Pureeing part of the soup gives it a creamy texture.

The Parmesan cheese rind adds a rich flavor to the soup. I freeze all my leftover Parmesan rinds. This time I used a 2" by 1" inch piece. An alternative is to sprinkle some grated Parmesan cheese before you serve the soup.

Ingredients:

Makes 3 to 4 servings

1Tbs. Olive oil
1 ¼ red onion, chopped
1 cup of celery, chopped
1 cup of carrots, chopped
1 cup potatoes, peeled and chopped
1 tsp. fresh thyme
1 bay leaf
1 tsp. cumin
1 cup of fresh or canned chopped tomatoes
1 cup of French green lentils, rinsed and picked over
1 small piece of parmesan cheese rind
4 cups of chicken broth
1 cup of water
2 to 3 cooked or smoked sausages
1 tsp garlic salt
½ cup chopped basil
1-2 tsp apple cider vinegar
Salt and pepper to taste

Directions:

Heat the olive oil and sauté the vegetables for about 8 minutes stirring occasionally to prevent burning. Add cumin and sauté for about 30 seconds to release the flavors. Add the broth, the water, the bay leaf, the lentils and the piece of Parmesan rind; bring to a boil. Reduce heat, cover, and simmer for about 40 minutes or until lentils are tender. Remove from heat, discard bay leaf and Parmesan rind and let it cool for a while. With an immersion blender blend part of the soup until creamy but leave half or more of the vegetables whole. If you don't have an immersion blender blend 2 cups of the soup in a blender or food processor. Cut the sausages into bite size pieces and sauté until slightly browned. Add the vinegar, sausages, basil and season with salt and pepper.

Guten Appetit
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