

K's Kitchen: Lentil soup full of health benefits

By Kathryn Reed

Lentils come in a variety of colors, with each having its own characteristics. But not all are good for every dish.

Red lentils tend to be sweeter and nuttier in flavor compared to brown and green lentils. They also get mushy when cooked. This can make them ideal for soups. With this recipe calling for the soup to be blended, it doesn't matter that lentils are mushy.

Lentils in general have a tremendous amount of health benefits, though each color varies so read the label. Fiber, protein and iron are some of good things in lentils.

Fresh tomatoes would be fabulous for this dish in summer. I have a hard time using fresh tomatoes this time of year because they are waxy and lack flavor. That is why I used canned.

I sprinkled the top with a little oregano and paprika to make it look prettier, but that is truly optional.



Red Lentil Soup

2 T unsalted butter

1 medium onion, chopped

2 carrots, finely chopped

3 celery stalks, finely chopped

5 garlic cloves, thinly sliced

1 tsp ground cumin

$\frac{1}{2}$ tsp ground coriander

$\frac{1}{2}$ tsp chile powder

1 $14\frac{1}{2}$ ounce can stewed tomatoes

2 C red lentils

8 C water

Salt

Yogurt, optional

Naan bread, optional

Melt the butter in a large pot, then add onion, carrots, celery and garlic. Cook over medium heat for a few minutes until vegetables are softened. Add cumin, coriander and chile powder. Add the tomatoes and cook for 3-4 minutes. Add the lentils and 8 cups of water.

Simmer until the lentils are soft, about 30 minutes.

Puree the soup with a blender. Season with salt.

Serve with a dollop of yogurt per serving. Use naan bread for dipping.