RED LENTIL SOUP

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K I T C H E N

This is a warmly-spiced, very satisfying dish that will greet you with open arms on a chilly day. Red lentils cook quickly and require no pre-soaking so the dish comes together fairly easily. They are rich in fiber, protein and iron, as well as other essential vitamins and minerals. Choose a vegetarian or meat version by the type of broth and sausage used.

The addition of bulgur adds body to the soup, as well as more plant-based nutrients. To up the nutrient density even further, stir in chopped, fresh leafy greens, such as kale, spinach or Swiss chard while simmering the lentils.

YIELD: approximately 8 cups

INGREDIENTS:
2 tablespoons olive oil
1 cup diced onion
2/3 cup peeled and diced carrots
1 tablespoon minced garlic
1 teaspoon fresh grated ginger
2 tablespoons tomato paste
2 teaspoons ground cumin
½ teaspoon chili powder
½ teaspoon curry powder
½ teaspoon kosher salt
¼ teaspoon fresh ground black pepper
2 quarts chicken or vegetable stock, low sodium preferred
1 cup red lentils, rinsed thoroughly, picked over
¼ cup bulgur, uncooked, rinsed
2 chicken or vegetarian sausages, diced

optional – 4 cups chopped spinach, kale, chard or collard greens

DIRECTIONS:
1. In a large pot, heat oil over medium. Add onions and carrots. Sauté until soft and slightly caramelized, about 8 minutes. Add the garlic and ginger and sauté an additional 1 minute.

2. Stir in tomato paste, cumin, salt, pepper, chili powder, and curry powder. Sauté for 1 minute longer.

3. Add the broth, lentils and bulgur. Bring to low boil, cover and reduce heat to low simmer. Cook approximately 45 minutes, until the lentils and carrots are very soft.

4. Remove from heat. Using an immersion or regular blender, puree the soup to almost smooth. Stir in the sausage. Return to low heat for an additional 10 minutes.

5. Soup can be served immediately, or cooled, refrigerated or frozen for later use.