

Lentil and Sausage Soup for a (warm) winter's night

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by Ski Boots in the Kitchen

Serves 4 hungry adults with lots of leftovers.

Ingredients:

- 1 1/2 cup French green lentils
- 2 bay leaves
- 3 tablespoons olive oil, divided
- 3 or 4 sausages made with herbs and/or garlic
- 1 large yellow or white onion
- 4 cloves of garlic
- 1/2 cup sturdy red wine
- 3 stalks of celery, and their leaves if possible
- 1 tablespoon dried marjoram or an equivalent amount of fresh
- 4 or 5 carrots, depending on their size
- 4 cups chicken or beef stock (or vegetable)
- 3 tablespoons organic ketchup
- 2 cups chopped spinach (I did 4 cups)
- 1/4 cup chopped parsley
- Salt and pepper, to taste
- Red wine vinegar, to taste

Directions:

1. Fill a tea kettle and bring it to a boil while you prep the other ingredients.
2. Heat the 4 cups of stock either on the stove or in the microwave if you don't have time (or space) on the stove.
3. Heat 2 tablespoons of olive oil in large pot/skillet with one bay leaf and cook sausage until browned on each side (even if the sausage is already fully cooked) remove with slotted spoon and set aside.
4. Rinse the lentils in cold water two or three times, pick out any stones or other debris, and put the lentils on the stove in a saucepan with at least three cups of hot water from the kettle. Cook lentils over medium heat, stirring occasionally. (don't worry if the lentils are not fully cooked when you add them to the soup.)
5. Meanwhile, dice the onions so they are about 1/2" square; chop the garlic. Cut celery into small dices and carrots into slices or chunks depending on how thick they are, and set them aside.

Add the remaining oil, as well as the onions and garlic, to the pan in which the sausages were browned; cook over medium heat, stirring occasionally. When the onions start to look a bit translucent, push them aside with a spoon and add the wine. Cook for a minute or two to deglaze the pot.

6. Stir the lentils in with the cooking water. It doesn't matter whether they are cooked. Just add them now, and add the stock to the pot with the onions and garlic. Add the celery and marjoram and stir well, continuing to cook.
7. Add the carrots to the pot, with the reserved sausages, and the salt and pepper to taste, and stir well.
8. Cook for at least another ten minutes, adding more water if necessary and stirring occasionally, to prevent the lentils from sticking.
9. Add the ketchup and stir well (I didn't measure the ketchup I just added enough till it looked good- but I am also weirdly obsessed with ketchup). Cook until the carrots are tender. Taste and adjust seasoning to your liking. Add the spinach and the parsley. Heat soup until very hot!
10. Pass the red wine vinegar separately, for people to add, to taste. Serve with a hearty whole grain bread and fresh butter.