

Red lentil dal

From the kitchen of Seth



Ingredients

1 cup red or yellow lentils
3 cups water
3 fresh tomatoes
2 teaspoons vegetable oil
½ cup finely chopped white or yellow onion
2 cloves garlic, finely chopped

2 teaspoons five spice, panch phoron:
(½ teaspoon nigella seeds or black [or white] sesame seeds, ½ teaspoon cumin seeds, ½ teaspoon fennel seeds, ½ teaspoon mustard seeds, ½ teaspoon fenugreek seeds)

1 bay leaf
1 teaspoon turmeric
1 teaspoon kosher salt
1 lime, juiced (about 2 tablespoons)
8 sprigs cilantro, de-stemmed, chopped
Cooked basmati rice (optional)

Directions

1. Rinse lentils with cold water. Add to medium saucepan with 3 cups water. Bring to boil. Reduce heat, cover and simmer 10 minutes or until lentils are soft.
2. While lentils are cooking, bring a separate pot of water to boil. Score tomato peels with a sharp knife in the shape of an "X". Add tomatoes to boiling water and blanch for one minute. Remove tomatoes to cool and peel them. Cut out and discard the stem ends. Chop or mash tomatoes and set aside.
3. When lentils have cooked at least 5 minutes, prepare the onions and spices. In a medium saucepan, heat the oil over medium heat. Add chopped onions. Cook until translucent, about 3 minutes. Add chopped garlic and cook for 1 minute more, stirring continuously. Add five spice mix (panch phoron). Cook and stir another 2-3 minutes. Add bay leaf and turmeric. Stir.
4. Add cooked lentils (with cooking water) to onions and spices. Add salt. Cook for 10 minutes.
5. Add lime juice and tomatoes. Cook 3-5 minutes. Add salt to taste. Stir in cilantro and remove from heat. Garnish with more cilantro. Serve with basmati rice or naan bread.