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Quick Arabic Soup

Ingredients

3tbsp olive oil
1 large onion, chopped
2 garlic cloves, minced
1tbsp tomato paste
1tsp ground cumin
¼ tsp kosher salt
¼ tsp ground black pepper
Pinch of ground chili powder or cayenne
1L chicken or vegetable broth
1 cup red lentils
1 large carrot, peeled and diced
Juice of ½ lemon
3tbsp fresh cilantro, chopped

Preparation

1. In a large pot, heat 3 tablespoons oil over high heat until hot and shimmering. Add onion and garlic, and saute until golden, about 3 minutes.
2. Stir in tomato paste, cumin, salt, black pepper and chili powder or cayenne, and saute for 2 minutes longer.
3. Add broth, 2 cups water, lentils and carrot. Bring to a simmer, then partially cover pot and turn heat to medium-low. Simmer until lentils are soft, about 30 minutes. Taste and add salt if necessary.
4. Using an immersion or regular blender or a food processor, puree half the soup then add it back to pot. Soup should be somewhat chunky.
5. Reheat soup if necessary, then stir in lemon juice and cilantro. Serve soup drizzled with good olive oil and dusted lightly with chili powder if desired.

Cooks Note