Posted on 20 June 2016

by Liz Robb

Red lentil and tomato dal

Ingredients

2 large vine tomatoes 1 small onion
A small piece of fresh ginger
A small green chilli
3 cloves of garlic
200g red lentils
1-2 tablespoons of oil
Three quarters of a teaspoon of mustard seeds
Three quarters of a teaspoon of cumin seeds
Half a teaspoon of red pepper flakes
A teaspoon of ground turmeric
Salt and freshly ground black pepper
1 lime
Fresh coriander [optional]

Preparation

1. 1. Score the skin of each tomato right around with a sharp knife, starting at the top, then do the same again, starting at right angles to the first cut. Place the tomatoes in a bowl of boiling hot water for a minute or two, making sure that the water completely covers them, then remove them. Slice off the very top part where the stem was attached, peel off the skin and chop into small pieces. 2. Peel the onion and then chop finely. Peel and grate or very finely chop the ginger. Deseed and finely chop the chilli. Peel the garlic cloves.
2. 3. Rinse the red lentils thoroughly in plenty of cold water, picking out any tiny pieces of grit that may be there. Place them in a pan with 475ml of cold water, bring to a simmer and cook for 10-12 minutes, or until the lentils begin to soften. Turn off the heat and set to one side.
3. 4. In another saucepan, heat the oil
4. I had olive oil, use whichever oil you prefer. Add the mustard and cumin seeds and allow them to cook for just 1 minute
5. be careful, they will pop and spit! Then reduce the heat, stir in the chopped onion, the ginger and the chilli, then the crushed garlic and the red pepper flakes, and cook gently for 4-5 minutes, stirring as you do so.
6. 5. Stir in the turmeric then add the chopped tomatoes and cook for a further 2-3 minutes.
7. 6. Add the lentils, stir to combine everything together well and cook gently for 20-25 minutes. Stir from time to time to prevent it from sticking, and add just a splash of water if it becomes too dry.
8. 7. Finally, season well with salt and black pepper and stir in the juice of half a lime. Chop the fresh coriander, if using, to garnish the dal.

Cooks Note

Lentils are a wonderful food; low in calories, virtually fat free, a good source of protein and high in fibre. This spicy lentil and tomato dal uses red lentils, easy to cook and quick to soften, making a lovely thick dal.

This dish makes a great side dish to accompany an Indian meal, or eat it simply with rice, chapatti or naan bread for a speedy and filling lunch or supper.