

Quick & Easy Tarka Dal



Serves: 4

Profitability:

Author: Anjula Devi in Spice for Life

Ingredients:

300g red split lentils

1lt cold water

KEY SPICES

½ tsp cumin seeds

1 tsp coriander seeds

1 tsp mustard seeds

¼ tsp black peppercorns

1 bay leaf

1 inch cassia bark

½ tsp turmeric

1 tsp red chilli flakes

WARMING SPICES

2 tsp fenugreek leaves, soaked in 4 tbsp hot water

WET INGREDIENTS

2 tbsp vegetable oil

2 oz clarified butter

2 tbsp tamarind pulp

2 tbsp good creamy natural yogurt

1 large onion, finely chopped or purée in a blender

200g good quality tinned chopped tomatoes

2 tsp pulped garlic

1 tsp pulped ginger

2-3 fresh green chillies, pierced (the number of chillies should reflect your preferred level of heat)

1 tsp grated jaggery

Sea salt to taste

Small bunch of fresh coriander, chopped

FOR THE TEMPERING

1 tbsp groundnut oil

6-8 fresh curry leaves

1 tsp mustard seeds

½ tsp cumin seeds

1 garlic clove, cut into fine slivers

2 dry red Kashmiri chillies

Steps:

Soak the lentils in hot water for at least 30 minutes. Then drain, and wash thoroughly until the water runs clear

Bring the lentils to the boil in 1 litre of cold water, over a high heat. Remove foam if desired

Reduce the heat to a simmer for 20 minutes, or until the lentils are tender. Drain half of the water and set aside. Once cool, stir in the tamarind pulp and yogurt

In a dry frying pan gently warm through the cumin seeds, coriander seeds, mustard seeds and black peppercorns, over a low heat for 1 minute until fragrant. Add to a pestle and mortar and grind coarsely

Take a large sauté pan, add the oil, butter, cassia bark and bay leaf and warm through on a low heat. Add the onions and fry until translucent and light brown. This will take at least 10 minutes

Add the turmeric and red chilli flakes and sauté for a further 2 minutes

Add the tomatoes and jaggery and cook for a further 10 minutes, or until you see the oil begin to appear at the sides or on the surface of the onions and tomatoes

Add the spices from the pestle and mortar, stir really well and cook for 2 minutes

Add the garlic, ginger and green chillies. Cook for a further 2 minutes and season with sea salt

Add the contents of the sauté pan to the lentils, stir well, and bring the lentils back to the boil

Reduce immediately to a gentle simmer, add the soaked fenugreek leaves, and cook for 10 minutes, or until you have the lentils to the thickness you like to serve them

Heat the groundnut oil in a small frying pan, add all the remaining tempering ingredients, and fry for 30 seconds

Remove from the heat and pour the tempering ingredients over the cooked lentils

Add fresh coriander and serve with boiled rice or chapattis