

# ITALIAN LENTIL SOUP

YIELD: 8-10 SERVINGS

This hearty Italian Lentil Soup recipe is easy to make, naturally gluten-free, and full of the best Italian flavors!

## INGREDIENTS:

- 2 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil
- 2 cups diced white onion (about 1 large onion)
- 1 cup diced carrots (about 2 large carrots, peeled)
- 1 cup diced celery (about 2 celery stalks, leaves removed)
- 4 cloves garlic, peeled and minced
- 7-8 cups vegetable or chicken stock
- 1 cup rinsed lentils (red, green or brown)
- 1 (15-ounce) can fire-roasted diced tomatoes (I used regular canned tomatoes)
- 2 bay leaves
- 1/4 teaspoon dried thyme
- 1/4 teaspoon freshly-ground black pepper
- pinch of crushed red pepper or red pepper flakes
- 2 cups roughly-chopped collard greens (I used rappini instead, any rough bitter green would be good)
- optional toppings: freshly-grated Parmesan cheese, finely-chopped fresh parsley or basil

## DIRECTIONS: STOVETOP DIRECTIONS:

1. Heat oil in a large stockpot over medium-high heat. Add onion, carrots and celery, and sauté for 6-7 minutes, stirring occasionally, until the onion is soft and translucent. Add the garlic and sauté for an additional 1-2 minutes until fragrant, stirring occasionally.
2. Add the stock, lentils, tomatoes, bay leaves, thyme, black pepper, and crushed pepper, and stir to combine. Continue cooking until the mixture reaches a simmer.
3. Reduce heat to medium-low and cover the pot partially with the lid. Keeping the soup at a low simmer, continue cooking for about 25-30 minutes or until the lentils are tender and cooked through, stirring occasionally.
4. Stir in the collard greens, and continue cooking for 5 minutes or until the greens have softened.
5. Taste, and season with additional salt and pepper if needed. Remove the bay leaves.
6. Serve warm, garnished with optional toppings if desired.
7. This soup can also be refrigerated in a sealed container for up to 3 days, or frozen for up to 3 months.

## SLOW COOKER DIRECTIONS:

1. Add the first 12 ingredients (through the red pepper) to a large 6-quart slow cooker, and stir to combine. Cook for 4-5 hours on high or 8-10 hours on low, until the lentils are tender and cooked through.
2. Stir in the collard greens, and continue cooking for 5 minutes or until the greens have softened.
3. Taste, and season with additional salt and pepper if needed. Remove the bay leaves.
4. Serve warm, garnished with optional toppings if desired.
5. This soup can also be refrigerated in a sealed container for up to 3 days, or frozen for up to 3 months.

## Tips n Twists

\*If making this recipe vegetarian, use vegetable stock instead of chicken.

\*\*If making this recipe vegan, use vegetable stock and omit the cheese.

\*\*\*If you would like to add meat, I recommend browning 1 pound of Italian sausage in a skillet separately. Then drain the grease, and stir the sausage into the soup. (I used turkey kolbassa yummy)

This delicious recipe brought to you by GIMME SOME OVEN <http://www.gimmesomeoven.com/italian-lentil-soup-recipe/>