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Hello, December! Thanksgiving was great and the winter holidays are approaching, with all of the feasting your family might enjoy. But right now? We're craving meals that are easy to make and that warm us up from the inside out. Like this lentil soup, which gets its comforting flavor and enticing fragrance from curry powder. If this isn't a spice blend you've used much, we recommend trying it—and we've got ideas for how to do just that! Simmer up a bowl of nourishing goodness, and enjoy this upcoming season of lights and loved ones.



Curried Lentil Soup with Spinach and Coconut

This soup is tasty and nourishing thanks to lentils, which cook relatively quickly compared to other dried beans. Experiment with the seasonings here, adding more curry powder if you like, or something spicy, such as cayenne, if that's your thing.

Hands-on Time: 45 minutes • Total Time: 1 hour 45 minutes • Makes:
6 servings

KITCHEN GEAR

- Cutting board
- Sharp knife (adult needed)
- Measuring spoons
- Measuring cups

- Large pot
- Can opener
- Heatproof spatula
- Pot holders

INGREDIENTS

- 1 tablespoon vegetable oil
- 1 large onion, peeled and chopped
- 2 carrots, scrubbed and sliced
- 2 celery stalks, sliced
- 2 teaspoons curry powder
- 1 pound (2 cups) brown or green lentils
- 8 cups (2 quarts) low-sodium chicken or vegetable broth
- 1 (15-ounce) can unsweetened coconut milk
- 1 (16-ounce) bag frozen chopped spinach
- Salt
- 1 lemon or lime, quartered, for serving

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Put the pot on the stove, turn the heat to medium-low, and add the oil. When the oil is hot, add the onion, carrots, celery, and curry powder and cook, stirring occasionally, until the vegetables are softened, about 7 minutes.
2. Add the lentils, broth, and coconut milk. Turn the heat down to low, partially cover the pot, and simmer, stirring occasionally to make sure nothing is sticking, until the lentils are tender, about 45 minutes. (If there's no liquid left in the pot when you check it, add 1 cup water.)
3. Add the spinach and cook until wilted and warmed throughout, about 5 minutes. Taste the soup. Does it need a pinch of salt? If so, add it and

taste again. Serve right away with the lemon or lime wedges, or let cool slightly, then cover and refrigerate up to 3 days.

OR ELSE

Instead of frozen spinach, use fresh spinach or kale, cleaned and chopped.

DID YOU KNOW? A masala is an Indian spice mix. Curry powder, on the other hand, is actually a British invention, but it's a mix of traditional Indian spices that might include ground coriander, turmeric, chiles, cumin, fennel, black pepper, garlic, ginger, fenugreek, cardamom, cinnamon, cloves, and mustard.



Video lesson

[Learn how to cut up an onion here!](#)



Try this now: Taste test

It's useful to know how a spice tastes so you can decide if you like it before adding it to a dish you're making. Here's a fun way to do it!

1. Gather an assortment of spices (try curry powder, ground cumin, cinnamon, black pepper, and cayenne) and sprinkle a bit of each around the rim of a dinner plate. Label them in case you don't remember which spice you sprinkled where.
2. Cut an apple into small chunks or wedges and put them in the middle of the plate. The apple will give you something to taste the spice on that doesn't have too strong a flavor of its own. (You could also use plain cooked pasta shapes or cooked potato cubes.)
3. Now start tasting: Dip an apple chunk in one of the spices and eat it. Is it a warm or cool flavor? Is it sweet or spicy? Is it mild or strong? Do you like it?

4. Which are your favorites?
5. Which are your least favorites?
6. Which spices do you think would go well with which kinds of food?
7. Guess which spices might taste good together, and try two or more at one time.
8. Close your eyes. Ask a friend to dip an apple slice in one of the spices and give it to you to taste. Can you guess which one it is?

Want more?

Want to season more foods with curry? Try these recipes!

- [Homemade Popcorn](#)
 - [Cauliflower Curry](#)
 - [Sweet Potato and Chickpea Curry](#)
 - [Creamy Coconut Squash Soup](#)
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WINTER 2023

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