



Tuesday, January 19, 2021

Greater Newark Conservancy's Health Tip and Recipe

Happy National Soup Month!

Happy Healthy Tuesday!

Did you know January is National Soup Month? Maybe not, but you're probably not surprised. This is definitely the perfect time of year to enjoy soups, stews, chilis, you name it! I have nothing against cold soup in the summer, but there's nothing like a steaming hot bowl of soup when it's cold, rainy, or snowing outside. I made my annual hoppin' john at the beginning of the month, which is a flavor-popping black-eyed pea stew that's supposed to bring luck (we could all use some good luck this year!), and my town is getting in the spirit by holding a weekly soup stroll!

What's so great about soup? The reasons are endless. To name a handful – it's easy to make, it's a flexible and forgiving way to use up softening veggies or leftover cooked meat, it keeps well, freezes well, reheats well, and it's delicious!

Start off with a good broth or stock (these are usually interchangeable in recipes) for your base. Next week, I'll go more into detail about how to make homemade broth and stock, and what exactly is the difference between the two.

After you have your base of broth or stock, the opportunities are endless! You can make a soup with your favorite meat, vegetables, canned beans and tomatoes from your pantry, and fresh herbs or spices from your spice rack. Soup is a fantastic way to use up vegetables that may be getting old or to get your children (or yourself!) to eat more veggies. Most vegetables work for soup, especially root vegetables and tubers (potatoes, sweet potatoes, carrots, onions, garlic), stems like celery, and leafy greens (spinach, kale, collards, chard, or mustard greens for some spice). I prefer soups that have beans or lentils because I find them more filling. Soup can be made quickly on the stovetop, or throw your ingredients in a slow cooker in the morning and let it simmer away all day (and make the house smell good)!

I hope you will join me for my monthly Family Fun in the Kitchen program on the Conservancy's [Facebook page](#)! This Saturday at 11 am, tune in live and make lentil soup with me, using this week's recipe below. Even though I can't see you, I would love to see your questions and comments in real-time!

Wishing you wellness,



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Recipe of the Week

Hearty Lentil Soup

Adapted from: <https://www.delish.com/>

Total time: 35 minutes
Yields: 4 servings

Ingredients:

- 2 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil (or regular olive oil)
- 2 carrots, peeled and diced
- 2 celery stalks, diced
- 1 small onion, diced
- 3 cloves garlic, minced
- 2 teaspoons cumin
- 1 teaspoon coriander
- 1/4 teaspoon crushed red pepper flakes, plus more if desired
- Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper
- 1 14-oz. can low-sodium diced tomatoes, with juices
- 10 ounces lentils (any color)
- 2 teaspoons fresh thyme
- 4 cups vegetable broth
- 4 cups baby spinach

Directions:

1. In a large pot over medium-high heat, heat olive oil. Add carrots, celery, and onion and cook until beginning to soften 5 minutes. Add garlic, cumin, coriander, and red pepper flakes, and cook 1 minute, stirring constantly, then season with salt and pepper.
2. Add tomatoes, lentils, thyme, and vegetable broth and bring to a boil. Reduce heat, cover partially, and simmer until lentils are tender and soup has thickened, 20 minutes. (If most of the liquid has been absorbed, add in 1/2 to 1 cup more water.)
3. Stir in spinach and continue cooking until wilted, 2 minutes, then season with salt and pepper.

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