

Lentil Soup

"Lentils are added to sauteed onions, carrots and celery. Lots of crushed tomatoes and water are added, and the magic begins. An hour later the soup is thick and wonderful and ready for a bit of shredded fresh spinach and a splash of vinegar."

INGREDIENTS:

1 onion, chopped	1 (14.5 ounce) can crushed tomatoes
1/4 cup olive oil	2 cups dry lentils
2 carrots, diced	8 cups water
2 stalks celery, chopped	1/2 cup spinach, rinsed and thinly sliced
2 cloves garlic, minced	2 tablespoons vinegar
1 teaspoon dried oregano	salt to taste
1 bay leaf	ground black pepper to taste
1 teaspoon dried basil	

DIRECTIONS:

1. In a large soup pot, heat oil over medium heat. Add onions, carrots, and celery; cook and stir until onion is tender. Stir in garlic, bay leaf, oregano, and basil; cook for 2 minutes.
2. Stir in lentils, and add water and tomatoes. Bring to a boil. Reduce heat, and simmer for at least 1 hour. When ready to serve stir in spinach, and cook until it wilts. Stir in vinegar, and season to taste with salt and pepper, and more vinegar if desired.

Fresh Herb Vinaigrette

This fresh herb vinaigrette is perfect for any number of summer salads. Try tossing fresh tomatoes with a little salt, pepper and this superb vinaigrette for a particularly delicious approach.

- 1/2 clove garlic, peeled
- 1 medium shallot, peeled
- 1/4 cup water
- 1/3 cup white vinegar
- sea salt, to taste
- ground pepper, to taste
- 2/3 cup extra virgin olive oil
- 1/4 cup loosely packed fresh tarragon leaves
- 1 cup loosely packed fresh flat leaf or Italian parsley
- 1 tablespoon fresh thyme leaves
- 1/3 cup loosely packed fresh oregano leaves
- 1/3 cup loosely packed fresh basil leaves

In a blender, place garlic, shallot, water, vinegar, a pinch of salt and pepper and blend for a few seconds. Restart blender at a medium to low speed and with blender running, slowly trickle half of the olive oil into the blender. Stop blender, add all the fresh herbs and blend once more and add left over oil while machine is running for a few more seconds. Taste and season with salt and pepper, if needed. Chill before serving.

