

Curried Lentil Mushroom Bolognese

Lentils and mushrooms form the hearty base of this “bolognese” (traditionally an Italian meat sauce), and a curried flavor gives it a little twist. It makes a quick and easy weeknight dinner. Often, I will serve leftover sauce over cauliflower rice for the next day’s lunch.

Ingredients

3 Tbsp olive oil
1 small onion (4 oz/110g), finely diced
2 small carrots (4 oz/110g), finely diced
2 medium stalks celery (3 oz/80g), finely diced
1 bay leaf
1 small bell pepper/capsicum (4 oz/110g), finely diced
1 cup/100g finely diced white mushrooms, or porcini if you prefer a meatier flavor
1½ Tbsp minced garlic
1 tsp grated ginger
1 tsp garam masala
¾ tsp red chile flakes
½ tsp ground cumin
½ tsp ground coriander seed
1 (15-oz/400-g) can diced tomatoes
2 cups/480ml low-sodium vegetable broth or water
¾ cup/90g dried green or brown lentils
½ tsp salt
½ tsp cracked black pepper
1 lb/450g spiralized veggie noodles of choice (Try to find something seasonal like butternut squash noodles)
2 Tbsp chopped fresh Italian parsley, for garnish

Directions

Step 1. Spiralize the zucchini into the desired size (I like spaghetti-size noodles for this pasta). Place in a colander over a bowl, salt lightly, and let sit for 15–20 minutes to draw out the moisture. Alternatively, if you prefer an al dente texture, skip this step and spiralize right before serving to avoid having the noodles sit too long.

Step 2. Heat a medium saucepan over medium heat. Add the oil, onion, carrots, celery, and bay leaf and cook, stirring, until the carrots are tender, 15–20 minutes. Add the bell pepper and mushrooms and cook for 3–4 minutes. Add the garlic, ginger, garam masala, chile flakes, cumin, and coriander and cook for 1 minute. Deglaze the pan with 1 tablespoon of water if needed. Add the tomatoes, mix, and cook, covered, until well combined, about 5 minutes.

Step 3. Add the broth, lentils, salt, and pepper and bring to a boil. Cover and simmer until the lentils are fully cooked, 20–30 minutes. Season with salt and pepper to taste.

Step 4. Pat the zucchini noodles dry with a paper napkin. Divide the noodles among four bowls. Top with the sauce, garnish with parsley, and serve.