Red Lentil Wild Rice Soup

Red lentils are tasty and cook very quickly. Here they contribute to a deliciously flavored, beautiful soup with an intriguing texture. This nutritious, legume-based soup can serve as the center of a meal accompanied by cornbread or biscuits, sautéed greens, and fresh fruit cobbler topped with a non-dairy frozen dessert. This recipe makes LOTS of soup. Freeze the extra or give some to your friends.

1 cup onions, diced
1/2 cup celery, diced
1 green pepper, chopped
1 cup red lentils
3/4 cup mixed wild and brown rice OR wild rice
1 cup carrots, diced
2 cups diced fresh or canned tomatoes (1 15-oz. can)
1/4 teaspoon ground oregano
1-1/2 teaspoons ground cumin seed
1-1/2 teaspoons salt or to taste
1/4 teaspoon pepper (optional)
9 cups water plus 2 rounded tablespoons of mock chicken broth powder or vegetable broth powder*

Sort lentils, and wash them in cold water; then drain them. In a large saucepan braise onions, celery, and green pepper in a little water until they are soft. Add lentils, rice, carrots, tomatoes, oregano, cumin, salt, and pepper. Mix well. Add 9 cups of water and vegetable broth powder. Stir, and let soup come to a boil. Lower heat, cover, and simmer 40 minutes or until lentils are soft. Add a little water as necessary if soup becomes too thick.

* Plant-based mock chicken broth power is available in health food stores and regular markets. Read the label to make sure that ingredients are 100% plant-based. If you have time you can also make your own vegetable stock (consult a cookbook for a recipe.)

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