

Louisiana-Style Red Lentils

with Brown Rice

Let's celebrate Mondays. This salute to the Big Easy is an update of the classic Creole "Red Beans and Rice." Traditionally, the dish was served on Mondays, made with the leftover ham from Sunday dinner. Our vegetarian version keeps both the aesthetic and the flavor intact, using red lentils (which are higher in protein than red beans), the trinity of Creole cooking (celery bell pepper & onion) and a lightly spicy, classic Cajun seasoning.



Ingredients

- ¾ Cup Brown Rice
- 3 Cloves Garlic
- 2 Stalks Celery
- 1 Bunch Thyme
- 1 Green Bell Pepper
- 1 Yellow Onion
- 2 Tablespoons Tomato Paste
- 1 Teaspoon Cajun Seasoning
- 1 Fresh Bay Leaf
- ¾ Cup Red Lentils
- 3 Tablespoons Vegetable Demi-Glace
- 4 Ounces Baby Spinach

Makes 2 Servings
About 675 Calories Per Serving



Instructions



Prepare the ingredients:

Wash and dry the fresh produce. Peel and mince the garlic. Small dice the celery. Remove and discard the stem and seeds of the green pepper; small dice the pepper. Pick the thyme leaves off the stems; discard the stems. Peel and small dice the onion.



Cook the rice:

In a medium pot, combine the **rice** with **1½ cups of water** and a **big pinch of salt** and heat to boiling on high. Once boiling, cover, reduce the heat to low and simmer 25 to 27 minutes, or until all the water is absorbed and the rice is tender. Remove from heat and fluff the finished rice with a fork or spoon. Set aside as you finish cooking.



Cook the vegetables:

While the rice cooks, in a medium pot, heat 2 teaspoons of olive oil on medium-high until hot. Add the **onion, garlic, celery** and **green pepper** and season with salt and pepper. Cook, stirring occasionally, 3 to 5 minutes, or until softened.



Add the aromatics:

Add the **tomato paste, bay leaf, as much of the Cajun seasoning as you'd like**, depending on how spicy you'd like the dish to be, and **all but a pinch of the thyme** (reserve the rest for garnish). Cook, stirring frequently, 2 to 4 minutes, or until toasted and fragrant.



Add the lentils:

Stir the **lentils, vegetable demi-glace** and **3 cups of water** into the pot of vegetables and aromatics, scraping up any browned bits at the bottom of the pot. Bring the mixture to a boil. Once boiling, reduce the heat to low and simmer, stirring occasionally, 10 to 12 minutes, or until the lentils are tender and the mixture has thickened.



Finish & plate your dish:

Stir the **spinach** into the pot and cook 1 to 2 minutes, or until wilted. Remove from heat and season with salt and pepper to taste; remove and discard the bay leaf. (If you find the lentil mixture too thick, add a little water to thin it out.) To plate your dish, divide the **rice** and **lentil mixture** between 2 dishes. Garnish with the **remaining thyme**. Enjoy!