

# Lentil Minestra

*with Crispy Sage & Fontina-Walnut Toast*

Minestra is a soup that dates back centuries—originally it was served (or “administered,” from the Latin “ministrare”) in households from one big bowl or pot. Today “minestra” broadly describes a pasta, vegetable or legume soup, typically smoother than minestrone. We’re going with creamy lentils here, complemented in texture by crispy sage and a side of special toast: walnuts, melty Fontina cheese and sharp Parmesan all combine to create the perfect topping for toasted baguette.



## Ingredients

- 1 Small Baguette
- 1 Cup Black Beluga Lentils
- 3 Cloves Garlic
- 1 Carrot
- ½ Fennel Bulb
- 1 Stalk Celery
- 1 Yellow Onion
- 1 Large Bunch Sage

### Knick Knacks

- 3 Tablespoons Walnuts
- 2 Ounces Fontina Cheese
- 1 Tablespoon Tomato Paste
- ¼ Cup Grated Parmesan Cheese

Makes 2 Servings

About 670 Calories Per Serving

Cooking Time: 25 to 35 minutes



1



### Prepare the ingredients:

Preheat the oven to 425°F. Wash and dry the fresh produce. Slice the baguette in half lengthwise. Peel and thinly slice the garlic. Peel the carrot and thinly slice into rounds. Halve the fennel; remove and discard the core. Small dice the fennel. Thinly slice the celery. Peel and small dice the onion. Pick the sage leaves off the stems; discard the stems. Roughly chop the walnuts. Thinly slice the Fontina cheese.

2



### Crisp the sage:

In a medium pot, heat 2 teaspoons of olive oil on medium-high until hot. Add the **sage** in a single, even layer; cook 30 seconds to 1 minute per side, or until dark green and crispy. Transfer to a paper towel-lined plate, leaving any remaining oil in the pot; season the sage with salt and pepper. Set aside.

3



### Start the minestra:

Heat the pot of **reserved oil** on medium until hot. Add the **garlic, carrot, fennel, celery and onion**; season with salt and pepper. Cook, stirring frequently, 3 to 5 minutes, or until tender. Add the **tomato paste**. Cook, stirring frequently, 2 to 3 minutes, or until the tomato paste is dark red and fragrant.

4



### Finish the minestra:

Add the **lentils and 4½ cups of water** to the pot of vegetables; season with salt and pepper. Heat the mixture to boiling on high. Reduce the heat to medium-high and simmer, stirring occasionally, 18 to 20 minutes, or until the lentils are tender.

5



### Make the Fontina-walnut toast:

While the lentils cook, place the **sliced baguette halves** on a sheet pan, cut sides up. Top with the **Fontina cheese, walnuts and half of the Parmesan cheese**; season with salt and pepper. Toast in the oven 7 to 9 minutes, or until the Fontina cheese has melted and the walnuts are lightly toasted. Remove from the oven and set aside in a warm place.

6



### Plate your dish:

Divide the **finished minestrone** between 2 bowls. Serve with the **Fontina-walnut toast** on the side. Garnish the lentils and toast with the **crispy sage and remaining Parmesan cheese**. Enjoy!