

Healthy Warm Food Cooking Demo

Minty Lentil Salad

Ingredients

1/4 cup extra virgin olive oil
1/4 cup red wine vinegar
4 cloves garlic, minced
1/2 teaspoon ground cumin
1/2 teaspoon of sea salt
1/2 teaspoon of pepper
1/4 cup chopped fresh mint
3 cups of water
1 cup of green lentils
1 cup of red onion, finely chopped
1 red, yellow, or orange bell pepper seeded and diced

Preparation

1. In a small bowl whisk together olive oil, vinegar, garlic, cumin, salt and pepper.
2. In a saucepan add 3 cups of water and bring to a boil.
3. Rinse the lentils and drain. Add them to the water and reduce to a simmer uncovered for 15-20 minutes.
4. Once they are tender drain and place in a bowl.
5. Add bell pepper and red onions. Gently pour the salad dressing over the lentil mixture.
6. Top with mint.

Information about Ingredients

Lentils

Lentils are a very good source of cholesterol-lowering fiber. Not only do lentils help lower cholesterol, they are of special benefit in managing blood-sugar disorders since their high fiber content prevents blood sugar levels from rising rapidly after a meal. A study published in the *Archives of Internal Medicine* confirms that eating high fiber foods, such as lentils, helps prevent heart disease. But this is far from all lentils have to offer. Lentils also provide good to excellent amounts of six important minerals, two B-vitamins, and protein—all with virtually no fat. The calorie cost of all this nutrition? This tiny nutritional giant fills you up—not out.

Garlic

Numerous studies have demonstrated potential benefits of regular garlic consumption on blood pressure, platelet aggregation, serum triglyceride level, and cholesterol levels. As a result of these beneficial actions, garlic can be described as a food that may help prevent atherosclerosis and diabetic heart disease, as well as reducing the risk of heart attack or stroke. In addition, garlic is an excellent source of manganese, a very good source of vitamin B6 and vitamin C and a good source of selenium.

Onion

The regular consumption of onions has, like garlic, been shown to lower high cholesterol levels and high blood pressure, both of which help prevent atherosclerosis and diabetic heart disease, and reduce the risk of heart attack or stroke. These beneficial effects are likely due to onions' sulfur compounds, its chromium and its vitamin B6, which helps prevent heart disease by lowering high homocysteine levels, another significant risk factor for heart attack and stroke.

Bell Peppers

To start, peppers are excellent sources of vitamin C and vitamin A (through its concentration of carotenoids such as beta-carotene), two very powerful antioxidants. These antioxidants work together to effectively neutralize free radicals, which can travel through the body causing huge amounts of damage to cells. Free radicals are major players in the build up of cholesterol in the arteries that leads to atherosclerosis and heart disease, the nerve and blood vessel damage seen in diabetes, the cloudy lenses of cataracts, the joint pain and damage seen in osteoarthritis and rheumatoid arthritis, and the wheezing and airway tightening of asthma. By providing these two potent free radical destroyers, bell peppers may help prevent or reduce some of the symptoms of these conditions by shutting down the source of the problem.

Peppermint

These healing properties of peppermint are apparently related to its smooth muscle relaxing ability. Once the smooth muscles surrounding the intestine are relaxed, there is less chance of spasm and the indigestion that can accompany it. The menthol contained in peppermint may be a key reason for this bowel-comforting effect. Essential oil of peppermint also stops the growth of many different bacteria. Extracts of peppermint have also been shown to help relieve the nasal symptoms of allergic rhinitis (colds related to allergy).

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