

Spicy Roasted Red Pepper, Tomato and Lentil Soup



Ingredients

4 large red peppers



400g tin of tomatoes



100g red lentils



fresh tomatoes



2 medium onions



olive oil



vegetable stock



smoked paprika



red chili



Method

The measurements given here are only approximate, I don't usually use a recipe for soup. This means you can add more or less of the ingredients to suit your personal taste. Also lentils absorb different amounts of water so if the soup is too thick when you have blended it just add more stock.

- ▶ Start by roasting the red peppers. Rub them with olive oil and place on a baking tray in a very hot oven for 30-40 minutes. The skins should look blistered and black when they are done. Place in a plastic bag and leave for 30 minutes (this makes it easier to remove the skins.)
- ▶ Next in a large saucepan fry the finely chopped onions and half a red chili, also finely chopped, in a tablespoon of olive oil, feel free to use vegetable oil instead if that is what you have.
- ▶ Add the chopped fresh tomatoes - I usually use the ones that have gone a bit squashy in the bottom of the salad drawer!

Method Continued

- ▶ After the onions, chilies and fresh tomatoes have cooked together for 10 minutes add the tinned tomatoes and 1 teaspoon of the smoked paprika and stir well.
- ▶ Then add 100g or one mug full of red lentils, which have been rinsed in cold water, and stir well.
- ▶ Make up one litre of vegetable stock according to the instructions and add to the rest of the ingredients.
- ▶ Simmer gently for 25 minutes or until the lentils are soft.
- ▶ Allow the soup to cool before tipping it all into a liquidiser and blending.

The Final Touches

- ▶ If you like a very smooth soup blend for longer. If you like more texture the save some of the mixture in a bowl and add it back to the rest of the soup when it has been blended.
- ▶ If the soup is too thick then add a little more stock until you get the thickness you prefer.
- ▶ This tastes good with a swirl of natural yogurt or cream and with some freshly chopped herbs such as parsley, chives or coriander but these are not essential.
- ▶ Enjoy with some good crusty bread!

