



# Brown Lentils and Zucchini with Lime

Serves 4-6

Brown lentils become soft and mushy if overcooked, so a little more care than usual is needed in their preparation. Adding oil to the cooking water helps keep them firm. *Chaat Masala* adds a tangy note to round out the dish—Vikas Khanna



Dara O'Brien

From "Flavors First: An Indian Chef's Culinary Journey" by Vikas Khanna, Lake Isle Press, 2011

## INGREDIENTS

- 1 ½ cups dried brown lentils, picked over, washed, and drained
- ½ teaspoon ground turmeric
- Pinch of salt
- 4 tablespoons vegetable oil
- 1 teaspoon black mustard seeds
- 1 small onion, finely chopped
- 3 medium zucchini, cut into 1-inch cubes
- ½ cup water
- 1 fresh green chile pepper (such as serrano), minced
- 1 teaspoon chaat masala (see below)
- Juice of 1 lime

## PREPARATION

- Place the lentils, turmeric, and salt in a large pot, cover with water by 2 inches, and bring to a boil over high heat, skimming off any foam. Reduce the heat to low, add 2 tablespoons of oil, and simmer until the lentils are cooked and still firm, about 20 minutes. Drain and reserve the lentils.
- Meanwhile, heat the remaining 2 tablespoons oil in a medium saucepan over medium heat. Add the mustard seeds and fry until they start to crackle, about 2 minutes. Add the onion and cook, stirring, until golden brown, 5 minutes. Stir in the zucchini and cook for 2 minutes, stirring until well combined. Add about ½ cup water and cook until the liquid is evaporated and the zucchini is cooked, about 3 minutes. You may need to turn the heat to high if the zucchini finishes cooking well before the water evaporates. Stir in the lentils, green chile, chaat masala, and lime juice and cook until well combined, about 5 minutes.

## CHAAT MASALA

### INGREDIENTS

- 2 tablespoons cumin seeds
- 1 tablespoon fennel seeds
- 1 tablespoon coriander seeds
- 1 1/2 teaspoons black peppercorns
- 1 teaspoon cayenne pepper
- 1 tablespoon carom seeds
- 1 tablespoon green cardamom pods
- 1 teaspoon red pepper flakes
- 8 to 10 cloves
- 1 tablespoon mango powder
- 1 dried red chili

### PREPARATION

In a heavy-bottomed pan, such as a cast iron skillet, over medium-high heat, add the cumin, fennel, coriander and peppercorns. Dry-roast until the aroma becomes highly fragrant, about 2 minutes. Remove from heat and let cool. Combine dry-roasted spices with remaining ingredients and grind to fine powder in a spice grinder. Store in a jar with a tight-fitting lid for up to 3 months.

Vikas Khanna



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