Low Carbon-e Recipes Cookbook

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Cheryl's Simply Satisfying Kumera Dahl (What)

A hit with the whole family! This meal is a winner on many counts.

(Why)

An easy, delicious and tasty Red Lentil Dahl rich in plant-based Proteins, vitamins and minerals, with complex carbohydrates and fibre giving a nutty flavour enhanced by sustaining spices. Like all foods, Dahl is always best when the freshest ingredients are used. Once you are satisfied, you can then experiment further with different quantities to meet your future meal requirements. This Recipe promotes the consumption of more wholesome foods that will support the minimisation of greenhouse gases in both farming and production to market and plate.

Combinations of Turmeric, Cumin, Coriander, Ginger, and Garam Masala are well known for their rich anti-inflammatory and antioxidant properties, which can aid digestion, reduce cholesterol, and alleviate bodily inflammatory ailments. And all the while, it tastes good too! Relatively easy to prepare, this Dahl tastes great and will satisfy your team with healthy ingredients. The country of origin of Ingredients can vary, but always aim for local products to minimise food miles.

(How)

Use a medium-large soup pot (5L). For best colour and flavour, my preference is Red lentils. This Recipe uses 375g of lentils, providing a good meal to feed four to six people in one sitting OR for several meals with leftover Dahl portions, which can be stored in the fridge for a couple of days or frozen for later use. Dahl is best when fresh, making it easy to experiment with quantities and additions to meet your needs (and any available leftovers).

Ingredients

375gms Red Lentils
2 Onions (white or brown, medium-sized preference)
Ginger root, shredded 10-20c piece ball (can adjust to taste)
2 tablespoons (30ml) of Extra Virgin Olive Oil or preferably cold-pressed organic Sunflower Oil
5 Garlic cloves (can adjust to taste)
1 medium Kumera aka sweet potato (500 g)
250g any Pumpkin - Optional, has a nicer flavour
2 cups (250ml cup) vegetable stock
Have more stock or water on hand if Dahl dries out
2 Tablespoons 30ml Tomato Paste (can adjust to taste)
1/2 Can 400ml diced Tomatoes
Small Can 150 ml Coconut Milk - Optional, makes the Dahl creamier
Garnish options: Small bunch of either fresh coriander leaves, mint or parsley leaves
Sour cream, small 250ml tub

Optional: A pinch of your favourite Salt.
Small amount of Spinach or chopped Celery (1 leaf or stem of each)
Half a Cucumber or half a coloured Bell Pepper / Capsicum.
Slice of Lemon

Lentil Preparation:
Put dry Lentils in a strainer. Check and discard any darkened impurities.
Rinse, wash in cold water, & drain the Lentils for immediate use. (don't soak)
NB: While some recipes suggest using Dahl directly from the packet, I prefer washing Lentils in cold water immediately before use.

Spice options:
This Recipe makes a reasonably flavoured and mild-medium Dahl, specifically using only Cumin, Turmeric, and Garam Masala.
(You may also add a pinch of your favourite Salt if desired)
Note: With caution, for a spicier Dahl, experiment to your preferred taste using proportions for a hotter result with:
1/2 Teaspoon Curry Powder (2.5ml in a 5ml teaspoon)
1/4 Teaspoon Cumin, Coriander, and Turmeric, and several shakes of Garam Masala for a mixture that suits your taste buds.

Recipe
Chop the Onions, mince or cut up the Garlic, and grate the Ginger.
Add 2 tablespoons of Olive Oil or sunflower oil to the pot and heat on medium.
* Fry onions with hot but not smoking heat until translucent (do not burn). Reduce heat, stirring in Garlic and Ginger when the onions are nearly done, then stirring until all are cooked.
* Add mixed spices to the Onion, Garlic, and Ginger, stirring constantly while cooking for 2 minutes, as the spice vapours are released. (NB: The longer this mixture is cooked, the stronger/hotter the spices will taste when Dahl is cooked.)
* Mix in the Lentils to the mixture and then add the Vegetable Stock to the pot and diced tomatoes, stirring all ingredients.
* Having pre-cooked (al dente firm to soft) Kumera and Pumpkin. Chop and add to the Lentil and vegetable stock mixture. Then cook on low to medium-low heat (generally 3 or 4) so that all the ingredients cook through, stirring regularly to prevent the mixture from sticking to the pot.
* Cook for an hour or until it reaches a consistency like porridge or firmer to your liking. Add coconut milk to reach desired flavour and consistency.
* Then stir in cooked Spinach and chopped Celery for variation. Serve with a dollop of sour cream on top. A small slice of Lemon to complete.

(Serving Tips)
Preheat your serving plates in winter. Garnish the served Dahl with coloured Bell pepper strips, a little cucumber, coriander leaves, and shredded mint or parsley leaves if available.
For your first use of this Recipe, you can gauge what this tastes like when cooked. You can then adjust the spices in your next pot to match your preferred heat and flavour level as needed.

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* Support the SRD Charity NGO who shares many ideas and direction for our thriving future, along with these Recipes. srd.org.au

Please send srd@srd.org.au your best Low Carbon-e Recipe in this clear Metric measure format: (What) (Why) (How) (Tips) (Pics) (+ smiling Chef).
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This is a Work in Progress, please suggest any improvements.
No dietary changes are given or advised, there is only information that you may choose.

COMING NEXT: Low Carbon Fruity Porridge; Local Omlette; Seasonal Organic Soup; KP's Oaty Snack