

*This recipe can be made with fresh, dehydrated, or freeze dried foods. I go over those options in the directions.*

## **Hearty Italian Lentil Soup**

Prep and cooking time: 2-3 hours

Servings 6-8, depending on serving size

Can be easily doubled or tripled!

1 Cup Chopped onion

1/3 Cup Carrot Dices

1 Cup Tomato Powder (OR 1-22 oz can of chopped tomatoes)

1 Tbsp Chicken Bouillon

1 Cup Lentils, soaked over night

1 1/2 Cup Chopped Spinach, or other dark greens like escarole, cress, mustard

2 Tbsp Olive Oil

Organic Spice Blend: (If using fresh, these measurements would be adjusted accordingly)

1 tsp. Dry Thyme (or to taste – Thyme is often too strong for me, I reduce to ½ tsp)

2 tsp. Dry Oregano

2 tsp. Dry Parsley

1 tsp. Dry Basil

1 Tbsp. Garlic Powder

2 tsp Onion Powder

Black Pepper to taste

Salt Optional - (we eliminate the salt because of the salt in the bouillon)

1 to 1 1/2 Gallons Water or Broth (If using fresh ingredients, reduce by half. If needed, more can be added later)

Option one: For Freeze Dried or Dehydrated. Pour 1 gallon of water into the pot, add all dry ingredients to the pot, and stir well. Bring to a boil, then turn to simmer, allowing to simmer for 30-60 minutes, until lentils are cooked through. Stir soup occasionally during simmering and add more water if it looks as though vegetables and lentils have absorbed too much. The longer the lentils cook, the more tender they will be. Allow to sit for a while to blend flavors. Best served the next day to allow flavors to mingle, but can be served as soon as Lentils are tender.

Option Two: For FD or Dehydrated. Rehydrate onions with 1/3 C. water from the one gallon of water set aside. In a separate container, rehydrate carrot, spinach, and Tomato powder in about 2 cups of water from the gallon. When Onions are rehydrated, add a little olive oil to the pan and heat. Add onions and sauté for a few minutes. Add the rehydrated carrot, spinach, and tomato powder then add the balance of the water. Sprinkle in bouillon, spices, and lentils. Bring to a boil, then turn down to simmer for 30 minutes. Remove from heat and serve, or allow to set for a bit for flavors to blend more thoroughly.

Option 3: For Fresh. Place olive oil in pan and lightly sautee the onions and garlic. Add the herbs and spices. Lightly sautee to allow flavors to blend. Add water, then bouillon, carrots, and tomato powder. Mix well, bring to a boil, reduce heat, and allow to simmer 30 minutes. Add soaked & drained lentils. Allow to continue to simmer for an additional 2 hours or so, testing the lentils for desired tenderness. When done, turn off heat and stir in greens, gently. If necessary, reheat the soup to desired serving temperature. Serve hot with Parmesan sprinkled on top.