

Recipes from the Winter Garden

By Helen Nash

With winter well underway, some hearty, nutritious, easy to prepare and low-in-calorie recipes are always welcome.

Red Lentil Soup

8 servings

2 tablespoons olive oil
2 medium onions, finely chopped
2 cloves garlic, finely chopped
2 teaspoons ground cumin
8 cups chicken or vegetable stock
1 3/4 cups red lentils, rinsed
1/3 cup bulgur
2 tablespoons tomato paste
1 bay leaf
Kosher salt
Freshly ground black pepper
1/8 teaspoon paprika, approximately
1/8 teaspoon ground red pepper (cayenne pepper), approximately

In a large saucepan heat the olive oil. Add the onions and the garlic and cook covered over low heat for a few minutes. Add the cumin and stir. Add 7 1/2 cups of stock, lentils, bulgur, tomato paste and bay leaf. Bring to a boil over high heat, lower the heat and cook covered for about 20 minutes or until the lentils are very tender.

Cool a bit. Discard the bay leaf. Puree 2 cups of the soup in a blender then pour it back into the rest of the soup.

Season to taste with salt, black pepper, paprika and cayenne pepper.

The soup freezes well.

Ms. Nash is the author of Kosher Cuisine (New Jersey, 1995) and Helen Nash's Kosher Kitchen (New Jersey, 2000). She lives in New York City.

Warm Cauliflower Salad

4 servings

Cauliflower is a vegetable that is available all year round. This salad is an easy to make, nutritious appetizer.

1 garlic clove
1/2 teaspoon kosher salt
2 tablespoons drained capers
1 1/2 tablespoons lemon juice
2-3 tablespoons olive oil
Freshly ground black pepper
1 medium head cauliflower (about 2 pounds), trimmed and cut into small florets
1/2 cup tightly packed flat leaf parsley, finely chopped

Mash the garlic to a paste with salt and place in a small dish. Chop the capers very coarsely and add to the garlic, along with lemon juice, olive oil and black pepper.

Steam the cauliflower for 3 minutes or until just tender, then transfer into a medium bowl. Pour over the dressing, stir in parsley and season to taste with salt and pepper. Serve warm.

Pan Roasted Curried Veal

8-10 servings

This is a convenient dish since it includes vegetables and a flavorful sauce. A starch, such as any kind of rice, bulgur, couscous or even quinoa is a good accompaniment.

One 3-pound center cut boneless veal shoulder roast, rolled and tied
1 3/4 teaspoons curry powder
4 tablespoons olive oil

10 ounces any small onions or shallots, peeled
2 cloves garlic, finely chopped
1 pound baby carrots
Kosher salt
Freshly ground black pepper
10 sprigs fresh tarragon, plus some for garnish
3/4 cup dry white wine
1/4 cup tightly packed Italian parsley, coarsely chopped

Pat veal dry and place on a sheet of wax paper. Rub the curry powder over the whole roast.

In a heavy 4-quart saucepan with a cover, heat the oil over moderate heat until hot but not smoking, and brown veal well, turning it with tongs. Add the onions, garlic and carrots. Season the meat and the vegetables well with salt and pepper. Add the tarragon, wine and parsley. Bring to a boil. Cover, lower the heat to a simmer and braise the meat, turning every 20 minutes, for 1 hour, for rare meat.

Turn off the heat and let the roast cool in the saucepan.

When ready, cut off the strings and cut the meat into thin rounds—1/4 to 1/8-inch slices. Wrap the meat in foil.

Add the juices that accumulate on the carving board to the pan. Season the sauce with salt and pepper to taste.

To Serve

Serve the meat at room temperature with the hot sauce and vegetables spooned over it.

Notes

The best way to peel onions or shallots is to drop them into boiling water, bring the water back to boil, drain the onions right away and peel.

Four pounds of meat will yield 10-12 servings. An electric knife works very well for slicing.

Fusilli with Roasted Vegetables

6 servings as first course

4 servings as a main course

This dish is equally good served warm, cold or at room temperature. The ingredients are easily available all year round.

1 pound asparagus
1 bunch scallions
4 cloves garlic
2 yellow bell peppers
1/2 pound Shiitake mushrooms
1/4 cup olive oil
1 pound fusilli, or other tubular pasta
Kosher salt



Photos: James Poster

Freshly ground black pepper

1 cup loosely packed Italian parsley, finely chopped

3-4 tablespoons balsamic vinegar, optional

1/2 cup freshly grated Parmesan cheese, optional

Preheat oven to 450°.

Trim the asparagus, rinse, pat dry and cut into 1-inch pieces. Trim the scallions, rinse, pat dry and cut into thin rounds, including the green parts. Cut garlic into very thin slices. Rinse the peppers, seed them and cut into thin lengthwise strips. Cut off the mushrooms stems and discard. Wipe the mushrooms with a damp paper towel and cut into medium strips.

Place all the vegetables into a Pyrex dish or any other ovenproof dish and combine with the oil.

Roast for 10 minutes, or until al dente (tender but still firm to the bite); then salt and pepper generously.

Meanwhile, bring 5 quarts of water to a rolling boil in a large covered pot. Add 2 tablespoons salt and all the pasta at once; stir well. Boil briskly, uncovered, for about 7 minutes, or until the pasta is al dente. Pour into a colander and shake vigorously to drain well. Combine the pasta with the roasted vegetables and parsley. Season to taste with salt and pepper.

Note

If you wish to season the dish with vinegar, the bright green color will change but the taste will be more distinct.

Warm Apple-Pear Compote

10 servings

In the winter months, when apples and pears are at their best and when warm desserts are welcome, this is a pleasant dessert.

Vegetable oil

5 Greening apples

4 Bosc pears, ripe but firm

3/4 cup golden raisins

3 tablespoons mild honey

1 teaspoon cinnamon

2 tablespoons cognac

3/4 cup apple juice (5 1/2 ounce container)

Preheat oven to 375°. Lightly grease 9x13-inch ovenproof dish with vegetable oil. Peel, core and cut apples and pears into 3/4 inch cubes. Transfer to a bowl, add the remaining ingredients and combine. Place in the prepared dish and bake for about 40 minutes, turning once, or until soft but not falling apart.

Note

If you are baking this dessert earlier in the day, you can reheat it in a 350° oven for 15-20 minutes to warm. **JA**

