

# Fortify Your Feast

With a hearty and iron-rich lentil soup

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## Why Iron?

Iron is what allows our blood to carry oxygen from the air we breathe to the parts of the body that need it. Without enough iron, we may feel tired, dizzy, or like we can't breathe well.

A person might be low on iron due to pregnancy, blood loss, frequent heavy exercise, or because they do not eat enough food with iron in it.

We get all of our iron from foods that we eat. Animal foods like meat, eggs, and seafood are naturally high in iron, because animals use iron in the same way that our bodies do.

There are many plants we eat that contain iron, as well.

National Institute of Health Office of Dietary Supplements. Iron: Fact Sheet for Health Professionals. March 30, 2021. <https://ods.od.nih.gov/factsheets/Iron-HealthProfessional/>



## Main Ingredients

This recipe calls for lentils, which are a really good source of iron.

Leafy green vegetables like spinach and kale are also very high in iron, though it is harder for our bodies to take it up from these sources.

Carrots, onion, and tomatoes contain some iron, but also contain larger amounts of other important nutrients that our bodies need.

Potatoes also contain some nutrients, including iron. Garlic, although mostly used for flavor, contains some iron, as well.



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## Ingredient List

There are a number of ingredient substitutions that you can make with this recipe, depending on your taste.

- 1 medium yellow or white onion, chopped
- 2 carrots, peeled and chopped
- 1 large potato, peeled and chopped
- 2 cups spinach or kale, chopped
- 4 garlic cloves, pressed or minced
- 1 large can (28 ounces) diced tomatoes, lightly drained
- 1 cup brown or green lentils, rinsed
- ¼ cup extra virgin olive oil
- 4 cups vegetable broth
- 2 cups water
- 2 teaspoons ground cumin
- 1 teaspoon curry powder
- ½ teaspoon dried thyme
- 1 teaspoon salt, pinch of red pepper flakes
- Freshly ground black pepper, to taste
- 1 to 2 tablespoons lemon juice (½ to 1 medium lemon), to taste

Cookie and Kate. Best Lentil Soup Recipe. 2021. <https://cookieandkate.com/best-lentil-soup-recipe/>



## Instructions

For this recipe you will need a chopping knife, measuring cups and spoons, a cooking spoon, and a large pot.

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<https://cookieandkate.com/best-lentil-soup-recipe/>

1. Warm the olive oil in a large pot over medium heat; once shimmering, add the chopped onion, potato and carrot (stir often until the onion is softened.)
2. Add the garlic, favorite spices and thyme, then pour in the drained diced tomatoes and cook for a few more minutes.

Note: To add additional iron to the recipe, complete steps 1 and 2 in a cast-iron skillet prior to adding them to the pot.



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3. Pour in the washed lentils, broth and water; add 1 teaspoon salt and pinch of red pepper flakes.
4. Bring the mixture to a boil by raising the heat. Partially cover the pot, reduce the heat to medium to low, and cook for 25 to 30 minutes, or until the lentils are soften/tender.
5. Add the chopped greens and cook until the greens have softened to your liking. Add 1-2 teaspoons lemon juice to taste.

## Substitutions

Beans and other legumes are also high in iron, and can be used instead of lentils if preferred.

Although fresh greens are preferable, you can use canned or frozen spinach instead.

The recipe calls for canned tomatoes, but this doesn't mean that you can't use fresh tomatoes if you have them, though you may need to cook them slightly longer.



Potatoes are high in carbohydrates, so for a lower-carb version consider substituting zucchini or another squash.

If you like you can add meat, which will provide extra iron and protein, but also more unhealthy fat. Consider choosing a lean meat like chicken.

## Substitutions

The recipe calls for cumin and curry powder, but you can use different spices, like chili powder, paprika, or coriander instead, or skip them. Herbs can be fresh or dried, or left out entirely. If you do not like spicy food, you can leave out the chili flakes. The lemon is optional, as well.



You can use store bought broth or bouillon, or make your own broth at home. If using store bought, low-salt broth is preferred. If you do not have broth you can use water in its place, but you will have to add a little bit of extra salt to make up for the flavor difference.

The recipe calls for olive oil, which is one of the healthier oil options. However, you can use other cooking oils, like canola and vegetable oil, if that is what you have available.