

Lentil, Goat Cheese and Spinach Salad

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Recipe adapted by Ann Johnson from source recipes at [Once Upon a Chef](#) and [Just a Taste](#) blogs

Yield: 8 side servings or 6 entrée size servings



INGREDIENTS:

For the lentils:

- 1 tablespoon olive oil
- 1 cup diced onion
- 1/3 cup diced celery
- 1/3 cup diced carrots
- 2 bay leaves
- 1 3/4 cups French green lentils
- 4 cups low sodium vegetable or chicken broth

For the dressing:

- 2 teaspoons finely chopped fresh thyme (or 1 teaspoon dried)
 - 3 tablespoons chopped fresh parsley, optional
 - 1 garlic clove, minced
 - 2 teaspoons Dijon mustard
 - 2 teaspoons honey
 - 1 teaspoon salt
 - 1/2 teaspoon ground black pepper
 - 4 tablespoons freshly squeezed lemon juice, from 1-2 lemons
 - 1/2 cup extra virgin olive oil
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- Fresh baby spinach leaves, 8-10 oz
 - Goat cheese (4-6 oz.), crumbled in large chunks

DIRECTIONS:

- Heat the olive oil in a large heavy-bottomed pot (Dutch oven) over medium-high heat, and then add the diced onion, celery, carrots and bay leaves. Sauté until vegetables are golden brown, 5 to 7 minutes.
- Add the lentils to the pot and cook for 1 minute.
- Add the chicken broth and reduce the heat to medium-low, simmering until the lentils are fully cooked and nearly all of the liquid has been absorbed, about 40 minutes.
- Discard the bay leaves and season to taste with salt and pepper. Set lentils aside to cool.
- To make the dressing: Select a medium to large jar with a tight lid, add all dressing ingredients except the olive oil (herbs, garlic, mustard, honey, salt and pepper, lemon juice). Close the lid and shake the jar vigorously to mix the ingredients. Add the olive oil and shake again, very hard, to emulsify the dressing.
- Add 2 tablespoons dressing to the lentils, stir to combine, then chill lentils in the refrigerator until ready to serve. Cover and chill the remaining salad dressing.
- When it's time to assemble and serve the salad: Give the salad dressing in the jar a good shake to re-mix, then drizzle 1 tablespoon over the spinach. Toss the spinach to lightly coat the leaves. Keep it light at this phase, additional dressing may be added later if desired.
- Spread the spinach on your platter, bowl or other serving container.
- Give the lentils a stir, add a pinch of salt and pepper if needed, then pile them on top of the spinach.
- Add crumbled goat cheese to the salad.
- Drizzle a little of the remaining salad dressing on top and serve the rest (if any) on the side. Let the salad sit (chilled) for about 20 minutes before serving so the flavors can get to know each other. Serve and enjoy.
- This dish doesn't get any prettier over time but you will have flavorful leftovers for several days.