

Sri Lankan Coconut Greens and Dal

I love nothing better than a good dal and so when I come across an exceptional one I really take notice. Meera Sodha never fails to deliver recipes that are spot-on the spice and easy to prepare. This one is truly a winner. And what you find below is an adapted version I've come to make my own.

Ingredients

- 1 pound red lentils
- 3 green cardamom pods
- 3 tablespoons coconut oil
- 1 cinnamon stick
- 3 whole cloves
- 1 large or 2 medium white or yellow onion thinly sliced
- $\frac{3}{4}$ inch piece of ginger, peeled and grated (about 1 tablespoon)
- 1-inch piece of turmeric, finely grated or 1 teaspoon of ground turmeric
- 1-2 green finger chiles or Serrano chiles, stemmed and finely sliced (adjust according to your taste for heat)
- 1 bunch of kale or collard (remove stems and chiffonade) or 2 bunches of fresh spinach (washed well, drained, and trimmed)
- $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon mustard seeds
- 4 tablespoons unsweetened shredded coconut
- 2 teaspoons kosher salt
- 1 lime, juiced
- $\frac{1}{2}$ can of coconut milk
- For serving
- Plant-based yogurt, for serving
- Prepared rice of choice, cooking with a few cloves and cinnamon stick if desired

Directions

Wash and strain lentils in cold water until the water runs clear. Place in a medium bowl, cover with water, and set aside. Bash the cardamom pods with the side of a knife so they crack open.

In a large heavy cooking pot or dutch over warm 2 tablespoons of the coconut oil. When hot, add the cardamom pods, cinnamon stick, and cloves. Heat for a minute adding onions. Saute over medium heat until soft and lightly browned. Add the ginger, green chiles, and turmeric. Stir-fry the spice and onion mixture for another 1 to 2 minutes. Remove a third to a shallow lidded fry pan and set aside.

Drain lentils and add to the pot with lentils, covering well with water. Turn the heat to high and bring to a boil. Low and simmer for 20 to 25 minutes, until the lentils are soft and creamy, stirring as needed.

Then turn your attention to the greens. Warming remaining coconut oil in the frying pan over medium heat adding the mustard seeds. When the seeds begin to pop add shredded coconut allowing to toast lightly. Then add greens of choice, 1/2 teaspoon of the salt and a splash of water, putting lid on quickly to steam. When soft and tender, add the lime juice and stir.

Check lentils and when they have become soft and creamy, add the coconut milk and taste, adjusting salt as needed. Remove from the heat, and pick out and discard the cardamom pods and the cinnamon stick. To serve, ladle into bowls and divide kale over the top. Serve with a side of yogurt and rice.

Enjoy!