

Ethiopian lentil soup (Susan Peterson Harrison)

This is my recipe for the lentil stew. It is actually a three-part stew, but once you've invested the time to make the spice blend and the spiced, clarified butter, it's easy. Make a big batch and freeze it!

Berberere (spice blend):

2 teaspoons cumin seed

4 whole cloves

3/4 teaspoon whole black peppercorn

1/4 teaspoon whole allspice

1 teaspoon fenugreek seed

1/2 teaspoon coriander seed

Put the above spices in a frying pan and toast for a few minutes (careful not to overheat!) stirring constantly.

In a small blender, add cooled spices from above plus:

1/2 teaspoon fresh grated ginger root

1/4 teaspoon turmeric

1 teaspoon salt

2 1/2 tablespoons sweet Hungarian paprika

1/8 teaspoon cinnamon

1/8 teaspoon ground cloves

Blend and store in airtight jar in fridge

Niter Kebbeh (spiced, clarified butter)

1 pound unsalted butter

1/4 cup onion minced

2 cloves garlic, pressed or minced

2 teaspoons grated ginger (fresh)

1/2 teaspoon turmeric

1 cinnamon stick

1 whole cloves

1/8 teaspoon nutmeg

1/4 teaspoon ground fenugreek seeds

1 teaspoon dried basil

In a small sauce pan, melt the butter and bring to bubbling (careful not to burn). When top is covered with foam, add spices and reduce to a simmer. Cook uncovered on low heat for 45 minutes. When surface becomes transparent and the milk solids are on the bottom, pour liquid through a cheese cloth into a heat-resistant container. Discard the solids. Cover and store in fridge up to 2 months (also freeze it in a plastic container, cutting chunks off as needed).

Yemiser W'et

1 cup brown lentils (found at Indian groceries)

Rinse and cook lentils

1 cup chopped onion
2 garlic cloves, pressed
1/4 cup Niter Kebbeh
1 tablespoon Berbere
1 teaspoon ground cumin seed
1 tablespoon Hungarian paprika
1/4 cup tomato paste
1 cup vegetable stock
1 cup green peas
salt and pepper to taste

Saute onion, garlic, and spices in Niter Kebbeh (clarified butter) until onions are translucent. I have a shortcut where I put everything in a pot and simmer until done. Then I add more seasonings to taste. It's a forgiving stew! The spices are so delicious, it covers up mistakes!

I got this set of recipes from *Sundays at Moosewood*, which is a wonderful regional and ethnic vegetarian cookbook (these recipes are from the Ethiopian section). I recommend the book to everyone!