

MOT more of this
—————
LOT less of that

Lentil Salad with Cucumbers

Brown lentils, a plant protein powerhouse are the main player in this cold, refreshing salad!

Serves: 4

Total time: <1 hour

Ingredients

- 2 cups brown lentils
- 2 cloves garlic, smashed
- 2 bay leaves
- 1/2 tablespoon whole-grain mustard
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 2 tablespoons sherry vinegar
- 6 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil
- 2 medium cucumbers, chopped into 1/2-inch pieces
- 1 cup pitted kalamata olives, roughly chopped
- 3/4 cup loosely packed fresh mint, roughly chopped
- 1 cup ricotta or feta cheese

Directions

1. Combine the lentils, garlic, and bay leaves in a large pot and cover with water by 2 inches.
2. Bring to a boil over high heat, then reduce to a simmer and cook until just tender, about 15 minutes.
3. Drain the water and pull out the garlic and bay leaves.
4. Refrigerate until cold.
5. While the lentil are chilling, make the vinaigrette: In a small bowl, whisk together the mustard, salt, and vinegar. Drizzle in the olive oil, whisking constantly until the dressing has emulsified.
6. Combine the lentils, cucumbers, olives, and mint in a large bowl. Pour over the vinaigrette and toss to evenly coat. Dot with ricotta or crumbled feta just before serving.

Mary-Beth says: *"The ricotta is a nice, creamy alternative to feta, which also would work nicely in this salad!"*