Tamarind Lentils
From Veganomicon Cookbook
Serves 4
Vegan, Gluten-Free, Soy Free

Savory, tangy and sweet, these Indian-inspired lentils are simple to prepare while cooking any basmati or brown rice and vegetable side dish.

Tip: For best results, use a small lentil that keeps its shape during cooking, such as black or green lentils. Brown lentils can be used but tend to get a little mushy.

Ingredients:

3 tablespoons coconut or peanut oil
3 cloves of garlic, minced
½ inch cube fresh ginger, peeled and minced
1 large onion, diced
1 teaspoon garam masala
½ teaspoon whole cumin seeds
Generous pinch of cayenne
1 cup dried lentils (preferably black or green), picked over and rinsed
2 cups vegetable broth
2 teaspoons concentrated tamarind syrup or paste
1 tablespoon pure maple syrup or agave nectar
2 tablespoons tomato paste
½ teaspoon salt

1. In a heavy-bottomed medium-sized pot with a lid, melt the coconut oil over medium heat.
2. Add the garlic and ginger and let sizzle for 30 seconds.
3. Add the onion and fry until translucent and soft, 2 to 3 minutes.
4. Stir in the garam masala, cumin seeds and cayenne and stir for another 30 seconds until the spices smell fragrant.
5. Add the lentils and vegetable broth. Increase the heat to high and bring the mixture to a boil.
6. Stir and lower the heat to medium-low. Partially cover and simmer for 30 minutes, stirring occasionally until the lentils have absorbed most of the liquid and are very tender (black lentils will be a bit harder and chewy but still delicious!) The lentils will be very thick, add a few tablespoons of water if a thinner consistency is desired.

Meanwhile…
1. In a small cup or bowl, combine the tamarind, maple syrup or paste (or agave nectar), tomato paste and salt.
2. Use a rubber spatula to scrape all of the mixture into the lentils.
3. Stir to completely dissolve the flavorings.
4. Simmer the mixture for another 4-6 minutes, stirring occasionally.
5. Adjust the salt to taste and serve immediately.