

Thai Red Lentil Soup with Aromatic Chile Oil

Adapted from [Yotam Ottolenghi's *Plenty More*](#)

Yield:

4 Servings

Ingredients:

For the chile-infused oil:

3/4 cup olive oil
2 shallots, chopped (about 1/2 cup)
1 clove garlic, coarsely chopped
1 tsp peeled and coarsely chopped fresh ginger
1/2 red chile, coarsely chopped
1/2 star anise pod
2 tsp curry powder
1 tsp tomato paste
grated zest of 1/2 lemon

For the soup:

2 Tbsp olive oil
1 medium onion, thinly sliced (about 1 1/2 cups)
1 1/2 Tbsp red curry paste
2 lemongrass stalks, bruised with a rolling pin
4 fresh Makrut lime leaves (or 12 dried)
1 1/4 cups dried red lentils

4 ounces sugar snap peas
1 cup coconut milk
1 1/2 Tbsp lime juice
1 1/2 Tbsp soy sauce
1 cup cilantro leaves, coarsely chopped
salt

Instructions:

1. *For the chile oil:* Heat 2 Tbsp of the oil in a small saucepan. Add the shallot, garlic, chile, star anise, and the curry powder; fry over low heat for 5 minutes, stirring from time to time, until the shallot is soft. Add the tomato paste and cook for 2 minutes. Stir in the remaining oil and the lemon zest and simmer very gently for 30 minutes. Leave to cool and then strain through a cheesecloth-lined sieve.

2. *For the soup:* Heat the olive oil in a large pot and add the onion. Cook over low heat, with a

lid on, for 10-15 minutes, stirring one or twice, until the onion is completely soft and sweet. Stir in the red curry paste and cook for 1 minute. Add the lemongrass, lime leaves, red lentils, and 3 cups of water [I used 2 cups water and 1 cup chicken broth]. Bring to a boil, turn the heat to low, and simmer for 15 minutes, until the lentils are completely soft.

3. While the soup is cooking, bring a small pan of water to a boil and throw in the sugar snap peas. Cook for 90 seconds, drain, and submerge in cold water to halt the cooking process. Set aside to dry. Once dry, cut them on the diagonal, about 1/8 inch thick. Set aside.

4. Remove the soup from the heat and take out (and discard) the lemon grass and the lime leaves. Use a blender or food processor to puree the soup until it is completely smooth. Add the coconut milk, lime juice, soy sauce and 1/2 tsp salt and sit.

5. Return the soup to medium heat, and once the soup is almost boiling, ladle into bowls. Scatter the snap peas on top, sprinkle with cilantro, and finish with a lashing of chile oil drizzled over each portion.