

# Mexican spiced tomato soup

READY IN: 50 MINUTES

SERVES: 4-6 as a meal with cheesy scones for dunking

This dish is filling, nourishing and really savoury. Red lentils are a good source of protein, iron and fibre and contain no fat; they also cook quickly giving this soup a thick satisfying, hearty character in a relatively short time. It's good with some cheesy bread or scones for dunking.

## YOU WILL NEED:

2 Tbsp olive oil

2 onions, chopped

3 cloves garlic, crushed

3 tsp Mexican seasoning – see below

2 400g cans chopped tomatoes

1½ cups uncooked red lentils, rinsed

6 cups of beef stock – allow 1 heaped tsp of stock powder per cup of water – see tips for vegetarians

⅓ cup tomato paste

2 Tbsp brown sugar

½ cup of chopped fresh coriander or parsley

Sour cream to serve – optional



## MEXICAN SEASONING:

Measure into an airtight container or jar, shake well and store with your spices.

1 heaped Tbsp ground cumin

2 tsp sugar

1 tsp oregano

1 tsp salt

1 Tbsp ground chilli

1. In a large saucepan heat the oil, add the onion and garlic and cook until soft.
2. Stir in the Mexican seasoning, tomatoes, lentils, stock and tomato paste. Bring to a simmer.
3. Stir in the sugar and simmer, stirring from time to time, for 45 minutes, till the soup is thick and lentils are tender.
4. Serve topped with a dollop of sour cream and a sprinkling of fresh herbs.

## TIP:

To make this vegetarian, swap the beef stock for vegetable stock and add a dash of soy sauce or a spoonful of miso for a hit of umami savoury flavour.

## SLOW COOKER:

You can make this in the slow cooker. It's a bit blander – that's slow cookers for you, but there are some days when you just don't care. Prepare the recipe to the end of step 1. Reduce the stock by 1 cup. Place all the ingredients except coriander and sour cream into the slow cooker and cook on high for around 6 hours or low for 8 hours. Season and add a dollop more tomato paste if needed. Serve with chopped fresh coriander and sour cream as usual.