

Idiot's Kitchen Recipe – Salmon with Savory Lentils

Recipe from www.idiotskitchen.com – Adapted from Ina Garten's *Barefoot in Paris*



Ingredients:

1½ cup (½ pound) small French green lentils
2-3 Tablespoons olive oil
1 large onion, finely chopped (about 2 cups)
2 leeks, chopped, white & light green parts only
4 ribs celery, chopped (about 1½ cups)
4-6 carrots, chopped (about 1½ cups)
3 cloves garlic, finely chopped
1 teaspoon fresh thyme leaves
1½ cups chicken broth
2 Tablespoons tomato paste
2 Tablespoons red wine vinegar
4 (6-8 ounce) salmon fillets (or one fillet per person, recipe can easily be expanded/contracted)
Salt & Pepper

Recipe note: This recipe makes enough lentils for 4 servings. If you are not serving four, you can cut the lentil recipe in half, however they are EXTREMELY good leftover served either hot or cold.

Bring 3 cups of water to a boil in a medium sauce pan. Rinse and pick through the lentils to remove any foreign bits. Remove the pot of water from the heat, add the lentils, cover, and steep for 15 minutes.

Remove the tough, dark green ends and roots from 2 leeks leaving only the white and light green parts. Cut the leeks in half and rinse thoroughly to remove any grit. Chop the cleaned leeks and set aside. Finely chop 1 large onion, 4 ribs of celery, and 4-6 carrots depending on size. Mince 3 cloves of garlic (about 1 Tablespoon) and remove the leaves from several sprigs of fresh thyme to equal 1 teaspoon.

After 15 minutes, drain the lentils and discard the soaking water.

Heat 2-3 Tablespoons of olive oil in a very large pan. (I used 2 Tablespoons because I have a non-stick pan.) Add the onions, leeks, and thyme leaves and season with 1 teaspoon each salt & pepper. Sauté over medium heat for 5 minutes until softened but not browned. Add the carrots, celery, garlic, and drained lentils to the pan. Stir in 1½ cups of chicken broth and 2 Tablespoons of tomato paste.

Bring the pan to a boil, cover, and reduce the heat to low. Simmer for 20 minutes or until the lentils are tender and no longer crunchy.

When you are ready to serve, stir 2 Tablespoons of red wine vinegar into the lentils. Taste, and season with additional salt & pepper if necessary.

Note: the salmon cooks VERY quickly so be sure your lentils have cooked before you start the salmon. The lentils can be held over very low heat or even served at room temperature.

Preheat the oven to 450 degrees.

Drizzle olive oil over the salmon fillets and rub to coat both sides. Sprinkle the top of each fillet with a bit of salt and lots of freshly cracked black pepper.

*Turn on your vent fan!

Heat a heavy, oven proof pan like a cast iron skillet on the stove over high heat for 3-4 minutes. When the pan is very hot, add the salmon skin side UP and sear for 1-2 minutes. This should form a nice crust on top of the fish. Flip the fish over and immediately put the pan in the preheated 450 degree oven for 5-7 minutes.

Depending on the thickness of your fish, the salmon needs no more than 5-7 minutes TOTAL to cook to medium rare. When in doubt, undercook the fish, and pull it out of the oven to rest like you would a steak.

Serve the salmon over a large spoonful of lentils.

Serves 4.