



## **Fakes Soupa (Lental Soup)**

### **Serves 4**

There are several types of lentils in Greece and Cyprus but the one used more frequently is the brown one. Pulses are a staple diet and lentils harvested in the summer months are stored to keep the chill out in winter although lentil soup is equally prepared in the summer.

From all the vegetables and pulses, lentils have the third highest amount of vitamins, iron, folate and magnesium. This helps to lower the risk of cardiac disease, lowers cholesterol and helps to control the levels of the blood sugar.

There are many dishes made with lentils which are married with other ingredients such as rice as a vegetarian dish or with meat or made into a soup with onions, tomatoes and sometimes with carrots and celery and most precious item of all olive oil. On Good Friday, lentils are boiled without the olive oil for those who fast.

It is not necessary to soak lentils to reduce the cooking time, unlike chick peas and beans.

### **Ingredients**

**500g brown lentils**  
**2 shallots, peeled and sliced**  
**2 carrots, chopped**  
**1 celery stick, chopped**  
**2 cloves of garlic, peeled and thinly sliced**  
**1 x 400g can tomatoes**  
**or 400g ripe fresh tomatoes, sliced**  
**1 tbsp tomato puree**  
**2 bay leaves**  
**100ml extra virgin olive oil**  
**1 tbsp oregano**  
**2 tbsp red wine vinegar**  
**Sea salt and freshly ground black pepper**  
**To serve: 100ml extra virgin olive oil.**

### **Method**

- 1. Clean and rinse the lentils in a strainer under a cold tap and put them in a large saucepan.**
- 2. Cover with cold water, bring to the boil and boil for 5 minutes.**
- 3. Drain the lentils and return to the pan.**
- 4. Add all the ingredients except the vinegar and seasoning. Cover with at least 3 litres of fresh water. Bring to the boil skimming off all the froth.**
- 5. Leave to simmer for 30- 40 minutes or until all the vegetables are soft.**
- 6. Add the seasoning and vinegar just before serving.**
- 7. Continue to cook for another 5 minutes.**
- 8. Divide the soup in four bowls and drizzle some olive oil in each bowl before serving.**
- 9. Serve it with lots crusty bread.**