

# spicy lentil & spinach soup, sardine toasts

(serves 4)

## ingredients

350g lentils (I use puy as i prefer their flavour)

1 carrot, 1 small onion, 2 cloves garlic, 1 stick celery – all finely chopped

1 large tomato, roughly chopped

4 large handfuls of washed spinach

1 large pinch of dried chilli flakes

1 ½ ltrs chicken stock (optional – you can use vegetable stock or water)

a tin of good quality sardines in olive oil

Any toasted bread of your choice (I prefer whole grain and seedy)

sea salt and freshly ground black pepper

## method

Bring lentils to the boil in plenty of cold water (DO NOT add salt at this point). When the lentils are boiling rapidly skim off any impurities that have risen to the top and reduce to a simmer.

In a heavy pan sweat the vegetables (not spinach) with the chilli, some olive oil, salt and pepper. When cooked thoroughly and sticking to each other add the cooked lentils and most of the chicken stock, increase the heat. When boiling carefully check the seasoning and throw in the spinach.

This will cook in less than 30 seconds so have your stick blender or food processor ready. Blitz the soup, adjusting the seasoning, chilli levels, and liquid as you go.

Take your hot toasts and crush some sardines onto them, using the oil they are packed in. Serve these alongside your soup.