

Highchair Travelers' Dal Makhani (Punjabi style)

1 c Urad Dal (black lentils), dry

2 t salt

1 t chile powder (Indian if you have it, regular is fine if not)

3 T butter

1 T oil

2 t whole cumin seeds

8 cloves garlic, chopped (yes, really)

1 medium onion, finely chopped

1 can (14 oz) petite diced tomatoes, or two large tomatoes, peeled and chopped

2 inches ginger root, peeled and grated, divided (I use bottled ginger because I am very lazy)

½ c heavy cream

2 t garam masala

Soak lentils for 3-4 hours or overnight in 3-4 cups water.

In a large pot, bring lentils to a boil in the water they soaked in (adding more if needed). Add salt, chile powder and half the ginger and continue to cook over high heat till lentils are soft but not breaking up (about 10-15 minutes). Drain lentils but retain cooking water and set aside.

In a thick bottomed pan, heat oil and butter over medium-high heat.. Add cumin and cook till it starts to pop, then add onions and garlic and cook till golden brown.

Add ginger and tomatoes and cook, pressing with spoon or spatula to break up tomatoes, for another 5-10 minutes or till oil starts to rise to the top of the mixture.

Reduce heat to low and add boiled dal to the mixture. Cook and stir, continuing to smash the mixture to break up the dal. (This is what gives it that great creamy texture.) Cook for 10 minutes. Add small amounts of cooking liquid if it dries out too much, you want it to be creamy but not runny.

Stir in cream and garam masala powder and simmer for 5 more minutes, stirring constantly.

Salt to taste (it may need quite a bit.) Serve hot with basmati rice or Naan.