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Mama Soup

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My mom found a version of this recipe in a woman's magazine (she can't recall which one) and started making it not too long after my sister and I started eating solid food. She was 24, home with twins, overwhelmed and without a driver's license. The ingredients for what we have always called "mama soup" are ones most home cooks keep on hand.

As she says, "Anything you could throw in a pot that tasted so good was right up my alley." She still makes it today, as do I. I started making Mama Soup in college with the encouragement of my maternal grandmother who used to send me \$25 a month she called "soup money." The diced butternut squash is my modern addition for more fall flavor and nutritional depth.

Ingredients

- 1 cup brown lentils, rinsed
- 1½–2 quarts water (approximately) or vegetable soup stock
- 1 28-ounce can crushed tomatoes in tomato puree
- ½ cup barley
- 2 cups butternut squash*, diced fine
- ½ cup onion, chopped
- 2 ribs celery with leaves, coarsely chopped
- 2–3 carrots, chopped or sliced
- 1 large white baking potato, peeled and diced fine
- 2 tablespoons parsley, minced
- 1 teaspoon salt (adjust to taste)
- 1/8–¼ teaspoon pepper
- 1 15-ounce can fire-roasted tomatoes, diced (optional)

Preparation

Place all ingredients, including optional fire roasted tomatoes, in a large stock pot and cook over high heat. Bring to boil. Reduce heat, cover and simmer 1 hour or until lentils, barley and vegetables are tender, stirring occasionally. Add more liquid if too thick.

*Tip: Buy the pre-peeled and cut butternut squash available in most grocery stores. You will have to cut it into smaller pieces, but most of the hard work is done.

Contributed by



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Natasha Nadel is a journalist and author focusing on the intersection of healthy food, family and community. She is the author of *Healthy Family, Healthy You: The Healthy Mama's Guide to feeding your family well – simply and sanely!* and *The Healthy Family Healthy You Cookbook*. You can find her free e-book, *Five Easy Weeknight Meals: Your 7 Day Family Makeover*, and healthy and creative ideas for your family on her blog.

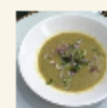
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Prep time: 30 minutes

Cook time: 1 hour

Yield: 10–12 servings

User Rating:



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