

Crostini with Lentil and Green Olive Salad

Ingredients

- 1/2 pound lentils, preferably from Abruzzi, rinsed and picked over
- 1 small onion
- 1 garlic clove
- 1 bay leaf
- 1/2 dried red chile
- 1/2 pound green olives, pitted and coarsely chopped
- 1 large celery rib, thinly sliced
- 1 large shallot, minced
- 1/4 cup extra-virgin olive oil, plus more for drizzling
- 1 1/2 tablespoons red wine vinegar
- Salt and freshly ground pepper
- 24 small thin slices crusty country bread
- 1 small fresh red chile, very thinly sliced lengthwise

Preparation

Preheat the oven to 400°. In a medium saucepan, generously cover the lentils with water. Add the onion, garlic, bay leaf and dried chile and bring to a simmer. Cover and cook over low heat until the lentils are tender, about 30 minutes. Drain the lentils, reserving 1/4 cup of the cooking liquid; discard the bay leaf and chile.

In a medium bowl, mash 1 cup of the lentils with a potato masher, then stir in the remaining lentils. Add the olives, celery, shallot, 1/4 cup of olive oil and the vinegar. Season with salt and pepper and stir in the reserved 1/4 cup of cooking liquid.

Arrange the bread slices on a cookie sheet and bake for about 8 minutes or until thoroughly crisp. Drizzle the crostini with olive oil and generously spoon the lentil salad on top. Garnish the crostini with slivers of red chile and serve.