

WHAT'S ON LORETTA'S SONOMA TABLE:

WARM FRENCH LENTILS WITH A MUSTARD VINAIGRETTE

SERVES 4-6

HEARTY SIDE DISH

INGREDIENTS

2 cups French green (Le Puy) lentils, rinsed well

2 bay leaves

4 teaspoons salt

1 medium onion, finely chopped

3 medium-to-large carrots, diced (1/4-inch pieces)

3 celery ribs, diced (1/4-inch pieces)

3 large garlic cloves, minced

4 teaspoons fresh thyme leaves, chopped

1 teaspoon black pepper

1/2 cup plus 3 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil

1/4 cup red-wine vinegar

4 tablespoons Pommery Moutarde de Meaux or other whole-seed mustard

2 tablespoons maple syrup

1/4 cup finely chopped fresh flat-leaf parsley

DIRECTIONS

Cover lentils with 2 inches water in a 2- to 3-quart heavy saucepan. Add bay leaves and bring to a boil, then reduce heat and simmer, covered, until almost tender, about 12 minutes. Stir in 1 teaspoon salt, then continue to simmer, covered, until tender but not falling apart, 3 to 5 minutes.

While lentils simmer, sauté onion, carrots, celery, garlic, thyme, 2 teaspoons salt, and 1/2 teaspoon pepper in 3 tablespoons oil in a 12-inch heavy skillet over medium heat, stirring occasionally, until vegetables are just softened, 7 to 9 minutes.

To prepare vinaigrette, whisk together vinegar, mustard, maple syrup, and remaining 1 teaspoon of salt and 1/2 teaspoon of pepper. Add remaining 1/2 cup oil in a slow stream, whisking until blended well.

Drain lentils in a colander, discarding bay leaves, and return to sauté pan along with vegetable mixture. Gently mix in the vinaigrette. Cook over low heat, stirring, until heated through. Just prior to serving, stir in chopped parsley.
