

# The Tastes of Ayurveda



*More Healthful, Healing Recipes for the Modern Ayurvedic*

Amrita Sondhi



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## Introduction

When I was writing *The Modern Ayurvedic Cookbook* in 2006, I kept coming up with more ideas and recipes to add to the book. Brian and the staff at Arsenal finally said, “Save it for the next book; we have to get this one to the press!” And that’s how *The Tastes of Ayurveda* began. Since then I have maintained my curiosity about food, yoga, and living life to the fullest. I have continued to collect recipes from my own inspiration, family, friends, fellow yogis and yoginis, backyard gardeners, and people who have returned to and/or never stopped following ancient traditions and maintain a zest for food, life, and contributing to both their local and global communities.

I was inspired to start the Pamoja Foundation ([pamoja.org](http://pamoja.org)) when I climbed Mount Kilimanjaro, the highest mountain in Africa, for my fortieth birthday. I learned that I could help raise money for the foundation through directing my passions and gifts; I got off the yogic mountaintop and started living the yoga. I donate ten percent of the profits from Movement ([movementglobal.com](http://movementglobal.com)), my sustainable eco-yoga/fashion line, and both of my books to the Pamoja Foundation, which raises money to sustainably alleviate poverty in east Africa and in Kenya (where I was born) through micro-financing. All of the donations go directly to grassroots borrowers (not to administrative costs), who then repay the loans so they can be lent to others in need.

People often tell me that they have no idea how I accomplish all that I do in my life (I also teach three yoga classes a week). I tell them that I am sustained and energized by my continual practice of yoga and my Ayurvedic diet. I have always believed we must be, in large part, what we eat—what we nourish ourselves with, on both physical and emotional levels. This is what motivated me to write this book.

Like its predecessor, *The Tastes of Ayurveda* includes an explanation of what the *doshas* are (p. xx) and the *dosha* questionnaire (p. xx), which lets readers determine their own primary dosha. If you've already completed the questionnaire, it is a great idea to do it again, as your constitution can change slightly over time. A section on the six essential tastes of Ayurveda follows, which explains how food, specifically the taste of food, affects people's personal constitutions. This book also offers basic tips on using herbs and spices, recipes for staples such as ghee and paneer, which are traditional to Ayurvedic cooking, and information about sprouting.

Over 200 easy-to-follow vegetarian recipes make up the major portion of this book. Each recipe has symbols to indicate how it affects your dosha (see p. xx). Many recipes also include variations for different doshas. Most recipes use whole grains and fresh foods (although I make reference to some recipes that freeze well if desired). There's a new interest in raw food diets since *The Modern Ayurvedic Cookbook* was published, so I've included a short introduction to Ayurvedic raw food principles in the Appendix, and each raw recipe is marked with a symbol (see p. xx). Vegan options and vegan recipes are also marked with a symbol (see p. xx). And since more people are interested in wanting to take control of their food sources, I've also included a section in the Appendix on how easy it is to start a simple balcony garden.

If the principles of Ayurveda are new to you, let's start by looking briefly at its long history and traditions.

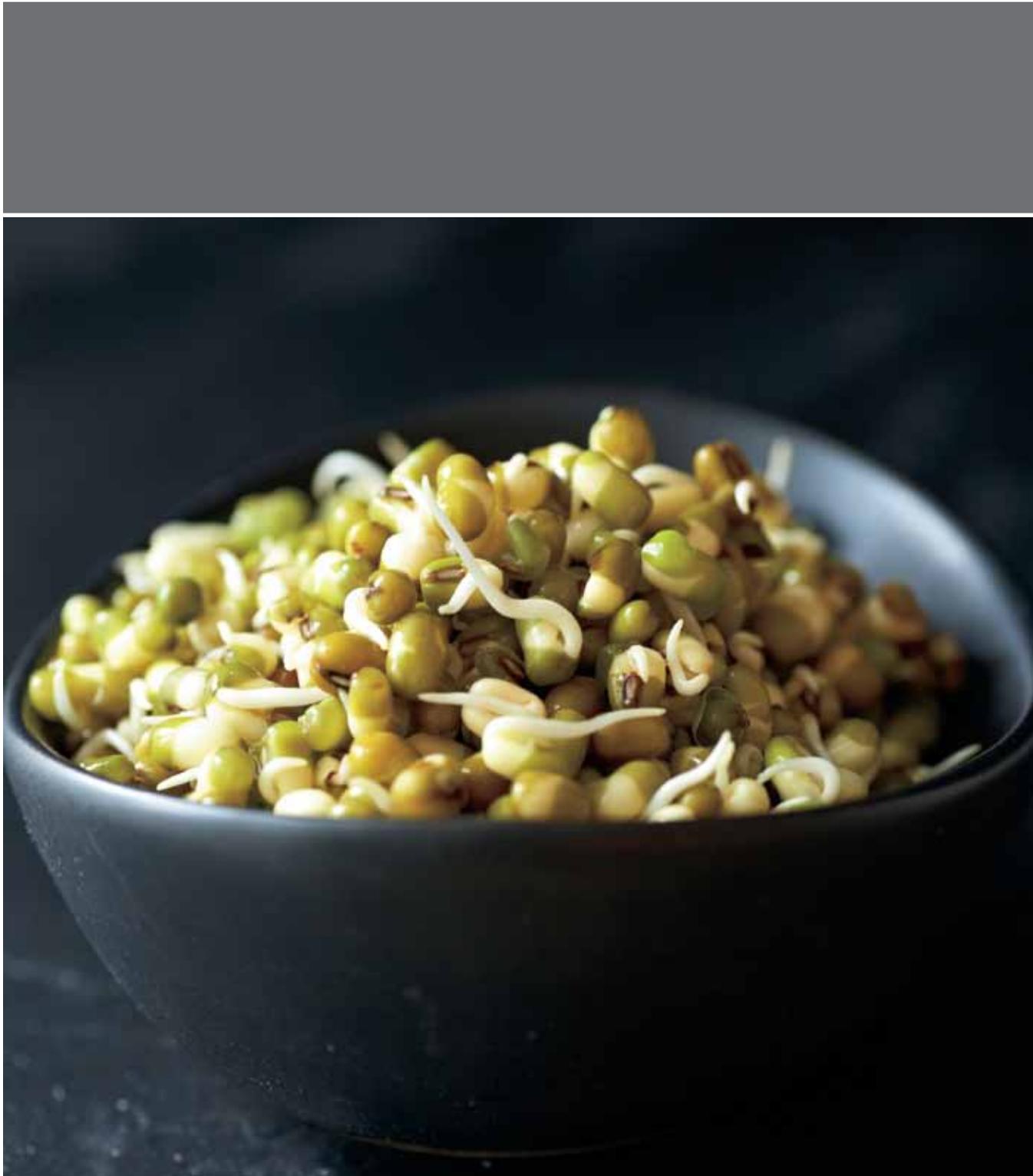
## History of Ayurveda

Originating in India more than 5,000 years ago, Ayurveda is the oldest system of healing. The name derives from two root words in Sanskrit (the ancient Indian language): *ayus*, which means life, and *veda*, which means knowledge or science; therefore in English, Ayurveda is "life knowledge" or "life science."

At the heart of Ayurveda is our intimate connection to the elements in nature, and how they can help us to achieve a physical and spiritual balance in all aspects of our lives. For the sake of our health and well-being, this balance can be accomplished through a number of means, including diet and exercise. The ancient sages of India, who lived in the mountains practicing meditation and yoga, believed that all material forms, including our bodies, are made up of five essential elements—ether, air, fire, water, and earth—in varying degrees, so maintaining a balance among these five elements is key to our physical, mental, and spiritual health.

Historically, the ideas and philosophies of Ayurveda were transmitted orally through the Vedas (ancient songs). The oldest song known is the “Rig Veda” (“in praise of knowledge”), which is almost as old as Ayurveda itself, and describes healing herbs and how they can be used. Later, by about 500 BCE, Ayurvedic knowledge began to be written down by the writers Charaka, Sushruta, and Vagbhata, which hastened its popularity. Two hundred years later, Ayurveda thrived with the advent of Buddhism, which was established in India under the rule of Ashoka the Great, and spread to China and Japan. But the Muslim invasion of India in the twelfth century CE led to Ayurveda being widely replaced by the Muslim system of healing, then further suppressed centuries later by the British, who feared the powers of the Ayurvedic doctors who were able to heal (or kill, if need be) in minutes by pressing specific *marma* (acupressure) points. With the return of Indian independence and the leadership of Mahatma Gandhi in the twentieth century, Ayurvedic schools and medical practices finally rose once again.

Today, this ancient and holistic healing science is arguably more popular than ever, and is a source of influences for many medical practitioners both east and west. Ayurvedic schools throughout India teach herbal medicine, massage, surgery, psychiatry, obstetrics, gynecology, astronomy, the use of mantra, meditation, and yoga among many other healing practices—to improve every aspect of life, balancing body, mind, and spirit. And most importantly, because Ayurveda considers food an integral part of its healing system, it originated some of the oldest and most time-tested principles of nutrition. Indian women cooking in their homes know a lot about Ayurveda and regularly use its principles in their meal preparation both to maintain health and to cure a variety of illnesses, from the common cold to more serious ailments, with appropriate foods that balance the doshas. Currently, these ancient remedies are now being proven scientifically and practiced around the world, most notably by Dr Deepak Chopra, the medical doctor and well-known scholar of Ayurveda.



# Soups

Soups are nourishing as appetizers, snacks, and complete meals. As an appetizer, soup gets the digestive juices warmed up and ready for the main course; as a snack, soup provides a great energy boost; and as a main course, a soup with the six essential tastes balances all the doshas. Soups are replenishing and healing when our agni

(digestive fire) is low, or in the winter when our bodies are using extra energy to keep us warm. They can be especially useful during the changing of the seasons as our bodies acclimatize.

In this chapter, I have included some delicious soups both light and hearty as well as a few raw recipes to offer a variety for all seasons.



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# Sprouted Mung & Shiitake Ramen Soup



Each year in mid-August, during “Bowfeast” weekend, we residents of Bowen Island celebrate local produce and feast together. This soup was first course at a communal dinner I hosted and it was heartily received. It included string beans and Swiss chard grown in my balcony container garden and carrots and mushrooms from the farmers’ market. Sesame oil calms the nervous system, especially for Vata. Shiitake mushrooms enhance the immune system and are beneficial to all doshas.

*Buckwheat, though often thought of as a grain, is actually a seed. Rich in iron, antioxidants, and magnesium, it is also high in fiber and known to regulate blood-sugar levels. It contains all 8 essential amino acids (the building blocks of protein), is gluten-free, and has a rich earthy flavor. “Soba” is the Japanese word for buckwheat.*

1 tbsp good oil (see p. xx)

1 tbsp sesame oil

1 tbsp minced ginger

3 tsp minced garlic

• To reduce Pitta: omit

1 green chili, minced

• To reduce Pitta: use less or omit

2 cups (500 mL) grated carrots

1 cup (250 mL) sliced fresh shiitake mushrooms

8 cups (2 L) vegetable stock

1 cup (250 mL) chopped string beans (1-in/2.5-cm pieces)

2 cups (500 mL) mung bean sprouts

½ cup (80 mL) tamari

3 cups (750 mL) chopped Swiss chard

5 oz (150 g) soba (buckwheat) noodles (1 bunch; these are often sold in separate bunches)

4 tbsp miso paste

• To reduce Pitta and Kapha: use 2 tbsp

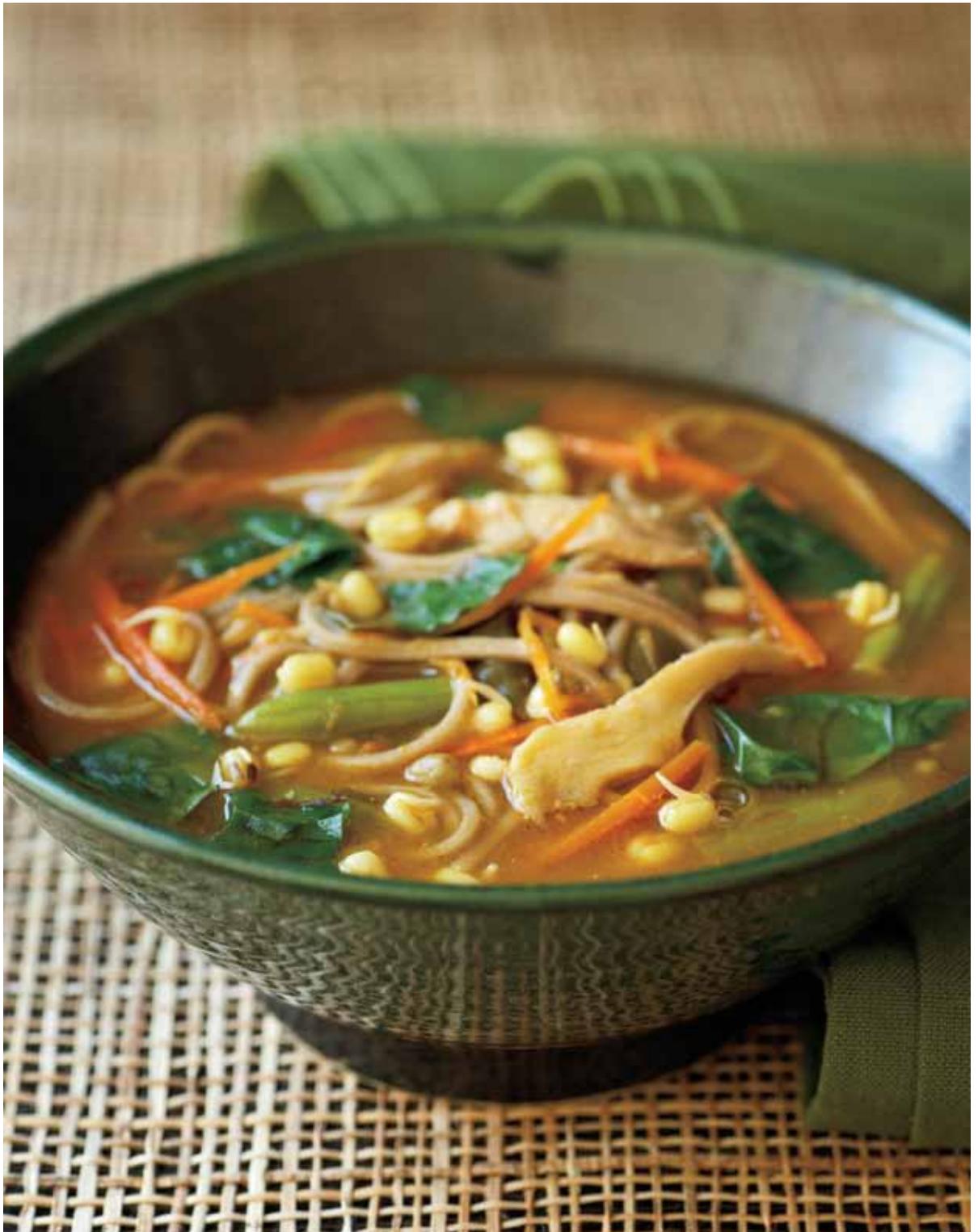
4 tbsp lemon juice

In a large pot on medium-high, heat oils. Add ginger, garlic, and green chili and sauté for 1 minute. Add carrots and mushrooms and sauté until they begin to soften, stirring to prevent them from burning, 3–4 minutes. Add vegetable stock and string beans and cook for about 10 minutes. Add sprouts, tamari, Swiss chard, and noodles and continue to cook for about 5 minutes. Remove from heat, stir in miso paste until it dissolves, and add lemon juice. Taste for seasoning and add more tamari if needed. If the soup is too thick, add water as needed and adjust seasoning.

Makes 8 servings.

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**Variation:** Substitute unsprouted split yellow mung lentils for sprouted mung beans.





# Five-Minute Sprouted Urad Dal Soup



This simple, nourishing dal is grounding and easy to digest because it is sprouted. Sprouting also increases vitamins A, B, and C and iron, among other nutrients. I like to keep some dal sprouting continuously so that I always have some to add to salads, soups, or wraps. The cumin and hing (asafetida) aid digestion.

*Urad dal are black-skinned, cream-colored seeds with an earthy flavor. Whole urad dal are known as black lentils; split urad dal as white lentils. They are slightly heavy and therefore grounding and restorative for Vata.*

- 4 cups (1 L) sprouted whole urad dal (black lentils) (see p. xx)
- 6 cups (1.5 L) vegetable stock
- 3 slices ginger (about 1-in/2.5-cm round and 1/4-in/6-mm thick)
- ¼ tsp ground turmeric
- ⅛ tsp hing (asafetida)
- ½ tsp ground cumin
- 1 green chili, sliced in half lengthwise,

- leaving end intact (so it appears whole and can easily be removed by the stem before serving)
- *To reduce Pitta: omit good salt (see p. xx), to taste cayenne, to taste*
- ¾ cup (185 mL) chopped fresh cilantro

In a large saucepan, bring all ingredients to a boil. Reduce heat to low and simmer until dal is softened, about 5 minutes.

Makes 4 servings.

*Hing (asafetida) is used in tiny amounts (just a pinch or about ⅛ tsp) in lentil dishes and some vegetarian dishes. It reduces flatulence, aids digestion, and balances Vata. Hing, available in Indian grocery stores, has a strong, distinct, pungent smell which becomes mild—with a flavor similar to onions and garlic—once cooked. Like garlic, hing is considered an antiviral.*

*Slicing chilies releases their flavor and heat. Use a sharp knife, and keep the end intact. Chilies are always optional. If you have excess Pitta, use very little or omit.*



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## Lentil Porcini Chili



Helen, who is renowned for the delicious and nourishing soups that she makes at Village Baker on Bowen Island, shared this wonderful recipe with me. She says that she loves it on a cold day after shoveling snow. Helen also says that the chili works well with whatever vegetables you may have (especially useful to know if you are snowbound!). The chili can be made the consistency of thick soup or into a more substantial dal by reducing the amount of stock and increasing the amount of lentils. I have adjusted this recipe in keeping with Ayurvedic principles.

*Dried porcini mushrooms add a wonderful, deep, woody flavor to dishes. They are generally soaked in hot water before using. These tasty delicacies offer many nutritional benefits including vitamins (A, B, and C), minerals (iron, calcium, potassium), and some protein.*

2 tbsp good oil (see p. xx)  
2 onions, finely chopped  
2 garlic cloves, crushed  
• To reduce Pitta: use 1  
2 green chilies, chopped  
• To reduce Pitta: use less or omit  
2 red bell peppers, diced  
2 green bell peppers, diced  
2 grated carrots  
2 tsp ground cumin  
2 bay leaves  
1 cup (500 mL) green lentils  
2 cups (500 mL) sliced mushrooms (button or your favorite)  
1 cup (250 mL) dried porcini mushrooms

1 tbsp ground dried porcini mushroom (grind in coffee grinder)  
6 cups (1.5 L) vegetable stock 2 cups (250 mL) water  
5 cups (1.25 L) chopped tomatoes, with juices  
1 tbsp tomato paste  
1 tsp Dutch fine cocoa powder or raw cacao powder  
1–1½ cups (1 bunch) finely chopped cilantro  
4 tbsp lime juice  
good salt (see p. xx), to taste  
ground black pepper, to taste

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In a large pot on medium-high, heat oil. Add onions, garlic, chilies, bell peppers, and carrots and sauté for 4 minutes. Add cumin and sauté for 2 minutes, and then add bay leaves, lentils, fresh mushrooms, dried mushrooms, mushroom powder, vegetable stock, water, tomatoes, tomato paste, and cocoa powder. Stock should cover vegetables; if more liquid is needed, add more stock or water. Bring to a boil, then reduce heat to low and simmer for 30 minutes, until porcini mushrooms and lentils are soft and tender. Add cilantro and lime juice. Season with salt and pepper.

Makes 6 servings.



## Wild Mushroom & Leek Soup



This is an easy starter soup before a meal to get your digestive juices going.

\*To make vegan, replace ghee with good oil (see p. xx) and omit yogurt.

*Wild mushrooms are an excellent source of minerals such as iron, potassium, phosphorous, copper, and selenium and are a good source of B vitamins. Mushrooms are balancing for all doshas when added to warm, moist soups or sauces.*

- |  |                                 |
|--|---------------------------------|
| 1 tbsp ghee (or butter)  | 6 cups (1.5 L) vegetable stock  |
| ¼ cup (60 mL) minced shallots  | 2 tbsp fresh thyme              |
| 1 leek, sliced, white and light green parts only                         | 1 tsp fresh oregano             |
| 3 cups (750 mL) sliced mixed oyster, shiitake, and chanterelle mushrooms | ½ cup (125 mL) yogurt           |
|  | good salt (see p. xx), to taste |
|  | ground black pepper, to taste   |

In a large saucepan on medium, heat ghee. Add shallots and leeks and sauté for 5 minutes, then add mushrooms and sauté for 7 minutes. Add stock, thyme, and oregano and bring to a boil, then reduce heat to low and simmer for 15 minutes. Remove from heat and let cool slightly before stirring in yogurt.

Makes 6 servings.



## Poets' Split Pea Soup



I made this on a wet day in April to inspire our poetry writing and reading evening; the poets approved wholeheartedly. I like the way the lemon juice and cilantro really bring out the flavors of the vegetables and split peas. This soup will leave you feeling satisfied but not overly full. (Remember to remove the bay and sage leaves before serving, or warn your guests not to bite into these.)

*Cilantro is not only delicious, it also acts as a chelator, helping to clean toxins, fungus, and yeast from our bodies. This fresh herb is antibacterial and a good source of fiber, vitamins A, thiamine, B6, C, E, and K as well as zinc and other great minerals, so add it liberally to your meals.*

- 1 tbsp good oil (see p. XX)
- 1½ cups chopped onions
- 2 tsp minced garlic
- 2 tsp minced ginger
- 2 tbsp minced jalapeño pepper
  - To reduce Pitta: use less or omit
- 1½ cups chopped carrots
- ¾ cup (185 mL) chopped celery
- 1 cup (250 mL) chopped parsnip

- 6 cups (1.5 L) vegetable stock
- 1 cup (250 mL) dried split peas
- 2 bay leaves
- 2 sage leaves
- 4–6 tbsp lemon juice, to taste
- 2 tbsp tamari
- good salt (see p. xx), to taste
- ¼ cup (60 mL) chopped fresh cilantro, for garnish

In a medium pot on medium-high, heat oil. Sauté onions for 2 minutes, then add garlic, ginger, jalapeño, carrots, and celery and sauté for another 4 minutes. Add parsnip, vegetable stock, split peas, and bay and sage leaves. Bring to a boil, then reduce heat to low, cover, and simmer until split peas are soft, about 40–45 minutes. Add lemon juice, tamari, and salt. Garnish with cilantro.

Makes 2 large or 4 small servings.



## Very Simple Dal Soup



The flavor of this soup is simple and nourishing. (Remember to remove the peppercorns and cloves before serving or warn your guests not to bite into these.)

1½ cups red lentils

6 cups (1.5 L) vegetable stock

24 whole black peppercorns

10 whole cloves

- *To reduce Pitta: use less or omit*

½ tsp ground turmeric

½ tsp good salt (p. xx)

1 tbsp lemon juice, or to taste

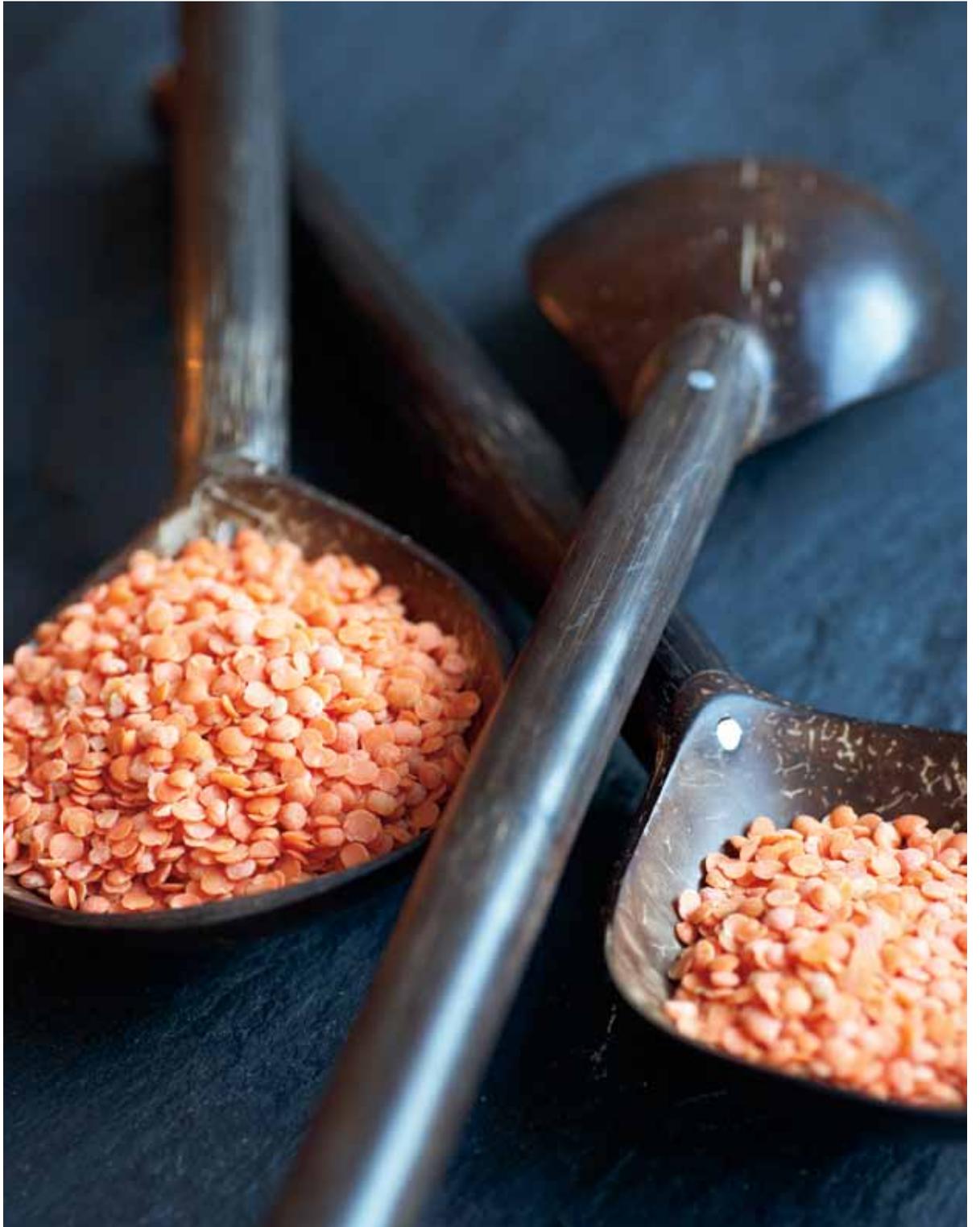
¼ cup (60 mL) chopped fresh cilantro

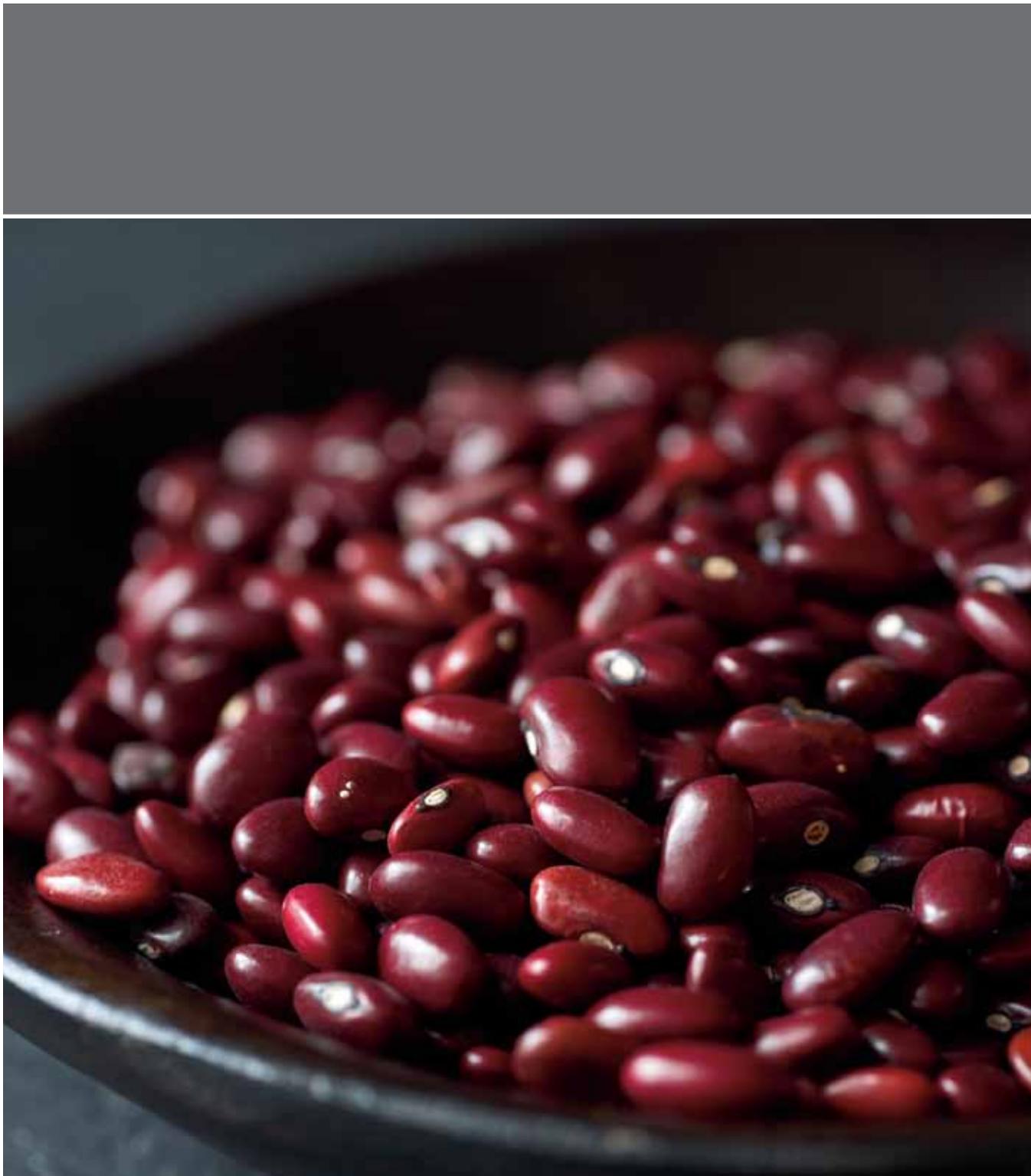
In a large pot on medium-high, bring lentils and stock to a boil. Reduce heat to low, skim off foam with a slotted spoon, and discard. Then add peppercorns, cloves, turmeric, and salt and let simmer until done, about 20 minutes. Stir in lemon juice and sprinkle with cilantro just before serving.

Makes 4 servings.



**Variation:** Use 1½ cups split yellow mung dal instead of red lentils.





# Entrées

In Ayurvedic cooking, a meal rarely consists of a single dish; but it usually includes a protein, dal (legume), or bean dish served with rice or other grain, vegetable, condiments (such as plain yogurt or pickles), and something raw, like a salad or sliced vegetables (celery, daikon, carrot, or slices of red pepper) to aid digestion. Some recipes within the section “Rice and Grains” (e.g., West Bay Biriani, p. xx) and Vegetables (Spicy Paneer Bean Pilau, p. xx), as well as many appetizers, soups, and salads in this book can also be served as entrées. A meal

that balances all the doshas ideally includes the six tastes: salty, sour, sweet, pungent, bitter, and astringent. It is important to eat meals that suit your constitution and current state of agni (digestive fire). If your agni is low, choose meals that will gently restore it.

This chapter contains not only traditional dal dishes but also healthy versions of more conventional entrées such as pizza and lasagna (in the Rice & Grains section), and a refreshing raw version of pasta (in the Vegetables section) that follow Ayurvedic principles.





## Beans & Lentils

Pulses (also known as legumes, and comprised of peas, beans, and lentils) mixed with grains are a staple of many diets all over the world and are an essential component of eating the Ayurvedic way to maintain health and vitality. The combination of pulses with grains (usually rice), which add the essential amino acids that pulses lack, forms a complete protein. The most beneficial serving ratio of rice to pulses for optimal complete protein content is about 2:1; e.g., 1 cup (250 mL) of rice to ½ cup (125 mL) of lentils.

In India, beans and lentils are known as gram (the larger, whole pulse) and dal (the smaller, split pulse), respectively. The chickpea, which is also known as the garbanzo bean in the West, is channa in India, so when you are shopping at Indian or specialty markets and see a package labeled “channa dal,” you’ll know it is split chickpeas!

Incorporating more beans and lentils (along with rice or other grains) into your meals is a great way to improve your health as they are known to decrease blood fats and hardening of the arteries, lower cholesterol levels, and promote a healthy heart. Pulses are a good source of iron and B vitamins and are high in fiber and low in fat; they are also inexpensive and can be stored for a long period of time without refrigeration. Some people find beans and lentils difficult to digest; those who do, or those who do not already eat them regularly, should introduce them into their diet slowly (about once or twice a week) to give the digestive tract time to adapt.

Before cooking, it is best to soak dried beans and lentils overnight as it helps to break down the starches and their notorious gassy properties—some pulses do not require soaking (see chart on p. xx for details). Plus, soaking shortens the cooking time while increasing their protein and vitamin C content. Pre-soaking, or “sprouting,” pulses also increases their nutritional value (up to an amazing forty times!) as it brings the seed that was dormant back to life. For more information on sprouting, see p. xx.

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After soaking, beans and lentils must be cooked thoroughly to ensure easy digestion. You'll know they are done when they are tender in the middle without being mushy—with the exception of the split yellow mung bean and red lentil (also known as Masoor or Egyptian lentil), which inevitably turn mushy and somewhat soupy.

Mung beans are among the easiest to digest, making them beneficial for all the doshas. They are considered cooling and restorative, giving strength and vitality. The cooling qualities of mung beans are best balanced by warm spices, like ginger, green chilies, cumin, and mustard seeds, to aid digestion. Additionally, the sour tastes of lemon or Tamarind Chutney (p. xx) will further help to stimulate agni, the digestive fire. Kidney beans and chickpeas are more difficult to digest and should only be eaten when agni is high, a common attribute of Pitta. If you want to clam excess Vata, look for recipes with urad dal (black lentils). Kaphas will benefit from recipes with channa dal and Masoor dal

# Cooking Beans and Lentils

Here is a general recipe for cooking most beans and lentils. Note that you should use about 1 cup beans or lentils for every 3–4 cups of water for cooking. You may need to add more water depending on the altitude you live in and the stove and pots you use. Keep in mind that the longer you soak the beans and lentils, the less cooking time they require.

TYPE OF BEAN OR LENTIL	AMOUNT OF DRIED BEAN OR LENTIL	AMOUNT OF WATER FOR SOAKING	SOAKING TIME	AMOUNT OF WATER FOR COOKING	COOKING TIME	YIELDS AMOUNT OF COOKED BEANS AND LENTILS
All beans and lentils, except ones listed below	1 cup	2–3 cups	6–8 hours	3–4 cups	40–60 minutes (dependent on soaking time)	2 cups
Azuki beans	"	"	"	"	"	3 cups
Black beans	"	"	"	"	"	2¼ cups
Kidney beans	"	"	"	"	"	2¼ cups
Red, brown, and green lentils	"	Not required	Not required	"	20 minutes	2½ cups
Split yellow mung beans	"	Not required	Not required	"	20 minutes	2 cups
Tur dal	"	2–3 cups	1–2 hours	"	40–60 minutes (dependent on soaking time)	2 cups

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1 cup (250 mL) dry beans or lentils	1 6-in (15-cm) stick kombu
2–3 cups (500–750 mL) water (for soaking)	1 fresh green chili, sliced in half lengthwise, leaving end intact
3–4 cups (750 mL–1 L) water (for cooking)	• <i>To reduce Pitta: omit</i>
¼ tsp ground turmeric	1 tsp good oil (see p. xx)
1 tsp good salt (see p. xx)	• <i>To reduce Kapha and Pitta: omit</i>
2 slices fresh ginger	⅛ tsp hing (optional)

In a large pot or bowl, soak beans or lentils overnight in water for no more than 12 hours; lentils require a minimum of 4 hours (see chart on p. for exceptions). Drain soaked beans or lentils. In a large pot, combine water and beans or lentils and bring to a boil. A froth may rise to the surface; skim off as much as possible with a slotted spoon. Add all remaining ingredients. Reduce heat to medium-low and simmer; make sure there is always enough water to prevent drying or burning. Beans or lentils are done when the center is tender but not mushy. Discard kombu, ginger, and chili (if used) before serving.

### Additional tips for cooking beans and lentils:

- Make sure you start with dried pulses that are fresh. Old pulses take a long time to cook and may have lost some of their nutrients. Dried pulses keep for up to a year when stored in a cool dark place. Always rinse them before cooking and pick out stones and debris.
- Don't soak split mung and red lentils, as they become mushy.
- Once pulses have been soaked, drain them and cook in fresh water.
- Bean and lentil dishes are often prepared in two stages. First, the pulses are cooked, and then the vagar (a blend of spices) is sautéed and added to the cooked beans and lentils before serving. The vagar not only enhances the flavor of the mild-flavored pulses, but it also aids digestion.
- Pulses cook slower when salt or anything acidic is added during their cooking process, so some people add the salt at the end. I prefer to have the pulses absorb the salt, so I add it earlier.
- Cooking pulses with fresh ginger aids their digestibility, as does adding kombu and hing.
- Kombu is a dried, black seaweed available at health-food stores and Japanese grocers. Indians traditionally use ginger and hing when preparing beans and lentils. Using kombu instead is a contemporary, cross-cultural touch; kombu is also full of minerals and nutrients. Kombu should not be eaten, so ensure you discard before serving.
- Hing (asafoetida) is spice made from dried resin that comes ground or in rock form and is available in Indian markets. A small jar will last a long time as you need only 1 tsp in your beans.
- Simmering means liquid continues to bubble occasionally. This usually requires medium or medium-low heat; however, you should always adjust the heat to ensure bubbling is at its lowest point.
- Removing the froth that appears on the surface helps to prevent flatulence.





## Curried Whole Green Mung Dal



Whole mung beans are prized in Ayurveda because their amino acids balance and nourish all the doshas. They are a good source of potassium, fiber, magnesium, and B vitamins.

Vagar is a group of spices sautéed together to flavor legumes and some vegetable dishes. It aids digestion and is commonly used in Indian cooking.

This is an easy dal to make and has great flavor. To complete your meal, serve with chapatis or rice and lemon wedges, plain yogurt or raita, and a salad. I leave this dal thicker if I am serving it with chapatis, but if serving it over rice I add a bit more water to thin it out. *Note:* Soak mung overnight (see p. xx).

1 cup (250 mL) soaked whole green mung  
3 cups (750 mL) water  
1 tsp good salt (p. xx), or to taste  
1 slice ginger, 1-in (2.5-cm round),  
¼-in (6-mm) thick

### Vagar:

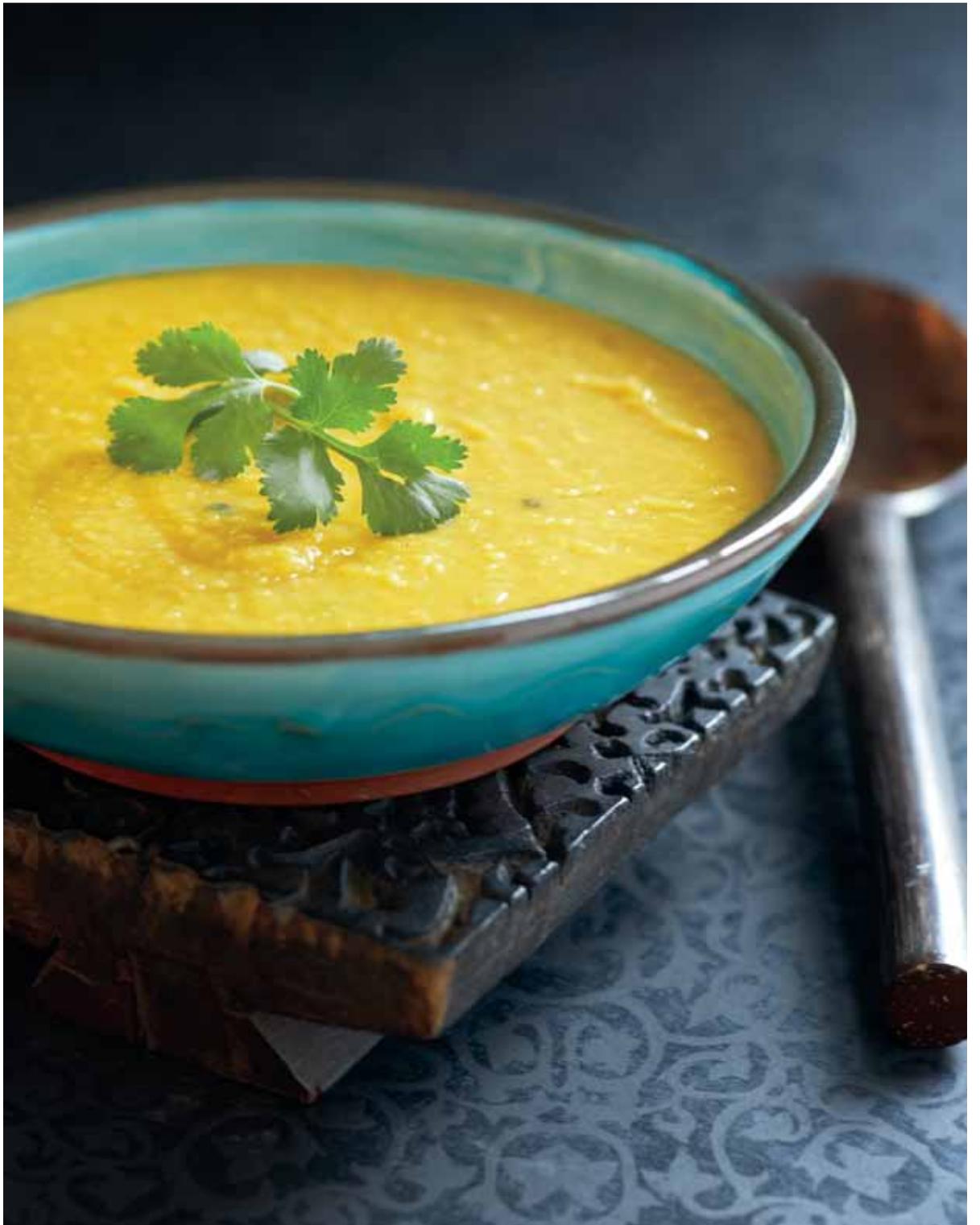
1 tbsp good oil (see p. XX)  
1 tsp ground coriander  
1 tsp ground cumin  
3 garlic cloves, minced  
• *To reduce Pitta: use less or omit*  
1 tsp minced fresh ginger

1 green chili, sliced in half lengthwise,  
leaving end intact (so it appears  
whole and can easily be removed  
before serving)  
• *To reduce Pitta: use less or omit*  
¼ tsp ground turmeric

½ tsp cayenne, or to taste  
• *To reduce Pitta: use less or omit*  
½ cup (125 mL) tomato paste  
2 tbsp lemon juice  
¼ cup (60 mL) chopped fresh cilantro,  
for garnish

Drain and rinse soaked mung. In a medium pot on high, bring soaked mung and water to a boil. Reduce heat to low. Skim off foam with a slotted spoon and discard. Add salt, ginger, green chili, and turmeric, and simmer for 30–40 minutes. In a medium saucepan on medium-high, heat oil. Add coriander, cumin, garlic, ginger, and cayenne. Sauté for 1 minute, then stir in tomato paste. Cook until the oil starts to come to the surface, about 4 minutes. Add this vagar to the pot of mung and stir to mix well. Continue to cook until dal is soft but not mushy, about 10 minutes. Add more water if too thick. Stir in lemon juice, sprinkle with fresh cilantro, and serve.

Makes 4 servings.





# Yellow Split Mung & Spinach Dal



I love this dal because it is quick and delicious. Make the vagar as soon as you put the dal on. Mung balances all the doshas. Spinach adds great flavor, nourishment, and color.

### Dal:

- 1½ cups (375 mL) split yellow mung
- 5 cups (1.25 L) vegetable stock
- 3 slices ginger, 1-in (2.5-cm) round, ¼-in (6-mm) thick
- ¼ tsp ground turmeric

### Vagar:

- 2 tbsp coconut oil
- 4 dried red whole chilies
  - *To reduce Pitta: use less or omit*
- 1 tsp black mustard seeds
- 3 cups (750 mL) chopped tomatoes
- 4 tbsp tomato paste
- ½ tsp ground turmeric
- 1 tbsp ground cumin
- 1 tsp good salt (p. xx), or to taste
- 1 tbsp minced ginger

In a medium saucepan on high, bring mung, stock, ginger, and turmeric to a boil. Immediately reduce heat and let simmer, covered, for about 25–30 minutes. Meanwhile, in a frying pan on medium-high, heat oil. Add dried chilies. When they blacken, about 2 minutes, add mustard seeds, and cover pan while they pop, about 30 seconds. Add tomatoes, tomato paste, turmeric, cumin, salt, ginger, and garlic. Cook until oil comes to the surface, about 5 minutes, stirring from time to time and adjusting heat. Stir vagar into dal (once it's cooked) and continue cooking for about 10 minutes. Add spinach in the last 10 minutes of cooking dal. Stir in lemon juice. Garnish with cilantro and serve with lemon wedges to squeeze over individual servings.

Makes 4–6 servings.



**Variation:** Use Swiss chard instead of spinach. Also add, at the same time as chard: ¾ cup (185 mL) finely chopped red bell pepper and ¾ cup (185 mL) finely chopped yellow bell pepper.



## Andy's Dal



My friend Andy Blick is a ceramicist who often makes dal in his crockpot at work. I happened to visit him around lunchtime one day and enjoyed the combination of textures, color, and flavors in this hearty dal.

- |   |                                     |
|---|-------------------------------------|
| 2 tbsp good oil (see p. XX)                     | 4 cups (1 L) red bell pepper soup   |
| 1½ cups diced onions                            | (see p. xx) or vegetable soup stock |
| 2 cups (500 mL) chopped tomatoes                | (see p. xx)                         |
| 2 tsp tomato paste                              | 6 carrots, chopped                  |
| 1 tsp ground coriander                          | 2 parsnips, chopped                 |
| 2 tsp ground cumin                              | 12 Brussels sprouts, halved         |
| ½ tsp ground turmeric                           | 2 cups (500 mL) shelled edamame     |
| 1 tsp garam masala                              | beans                               |
| 3 tbsp minced ginger                            | good salt (p. xx), to taste         |
| 1 tbsp minced garlic                            | ground black pepper, to taste       |
| • <i>To reduce Pitta: omit</i>                  |                                     |
| 1½ cups (375 mL) red lentils                    |                                     |
| • <i>To reduce Pitta: use yellow split mung</i> |                                     |

In a large pot on medium-high, heat oil. Add onions and sauté for 1–2 minutes, until they become translucent. Add tomatoes, tomato paste, coriander, cumin, turmeric, garam masala, ginger, and garlic and cook until tomatoes soften. Then add lentils, red pepper soup or stock, and all remaining vegetables and beans. Add enough water to cover vegetables by 1/4 in (6 mm). Bring to a boil, then reduce heat to medium-low and simmer for 35–40 minutes. Add salt and pepper to taste and more water if dal seems too thick.

Makes 8–10 servings.

**Crockpot variation:** Add all ingredients to the crockpot just before you leave for work in the morning and cook on low setting so it will be ready when you return in the evening.



## Spice Wimp Dal

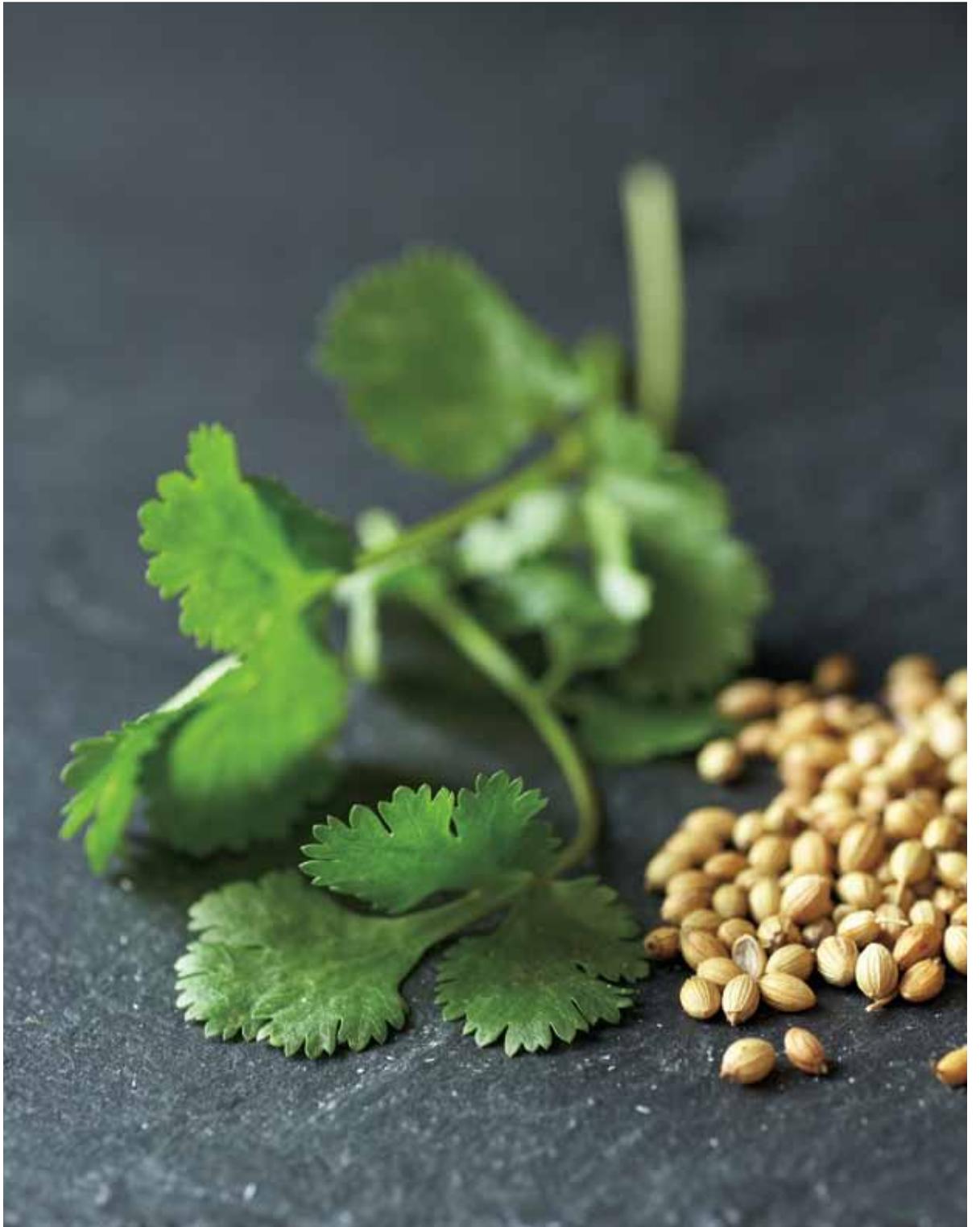


My friend Pauline, who can't eat spicy foods, wrote a song about this called "Spice Wimp." I created this recipe for her and others like her—and they love it. (You'll find a spicier version on p. xx.) Cilantro balances all the doshas, and the cinnamon and pepper make it warmer for Vata and easier to digest for Kapha.

1 cup (250 mL) split masoor dal (red lentils)	5 whole black peppercorns
1 cup (250 mL) vegetable stock	1 cup (250 mL) water
1 cup (250 mL) chopped celery	1 cup (250 mL) chopped fresh cilantro
3½–4 cups (830 mL–1 L) chopped tomatoes, with their juices	good salt (p. xx), to taste
1½-in (1-cm) piece cinnamon bark (available in Indian grocery stores)	1 tbs lemon juice

In a large pot on medium, add all ingredients except cilantro, salt, and lemon juice and bring to a boil. Reduce heat and simmer for about 20 minutes. (If it's too thick, add more water or stock.) Add cilantro and cook for another 5 minutes. Season to taste with salt, and stir in lemon juice just before serving.

Makes 4 servings.





# Red Lentils with Vegetables



Red lentils store easily and cook quickly for a tasty, nutritious meal.

*You can use a reusable cloth teabag or square of cheesecloth tied with string for the bouquet garni of ginger, cinnamon, peppercorns, and cloves; this makes it easier to remove the spices before serving.*

*Red lentils are skinned and split masoor lentils, sometimes known as pink lentils. They turn yellow once cooked!*

**Dal:**  
2 cups (500 mL) split masoor dal (red lentils)  
4 cups (1 L) vegetable stock  
4 cups (1 L) water  
1 cup (250 mL) diced celery  
3 slices ginger, 1-in (2.5-cm) rounds, ¼-in (6-mm) thick

**Vagar:**  
1 tbsp good oil (see p. xx)  
4 dried whole red chilies  
1 tbsp black mustard seeds  
4 tomatoes, chopped  
4 tbsp tomato paste  
¼ tsp ground turmeric  
3 tsp ground cumin

1 piece cinnamon bark, 2-in (5-cm) long  
12 whole black peppercorns  
2 whole cloves  
¼ tsp ground turmeric  
good salt (p. xx), to taste  
1 cup (250 mL) chopped fresh cilantro  
2 tbsp lemon juice

3 tsp ground coriander  
1 tsp good salt (p. xx)  
1 tbsp minced ginger  
1 tbsp minced garlic  
1 tbsp Tamarind Chutney (see p. xx)  
¼ cup (60 mL) fresh cilantro, for garnish

In a large pot on high, bring lentils, stock, water, celery, ginger, cinnamon, peppercorns, cloves, turmeric, and salt to a boil. Reduce heat to medium-low and simmer for 20 minutes. In last 5 minutes of cooking dal, stir in 1 cup (250 mL) cilantro and lemon juice.

In a frying pan on medium-high, heat oil. Add dried chilies. When they blacken, add mustard seeds and cover while they pop, about 30 seconds. Immediately add all remaining vagar ingredients, except garnishes. Cook about 8–10 minutes (oil will come to the surface). Stir vagar into dal. Stir in chutney, garnish with ¼ cup (60 mL) cilantro, and serve.

Makes 6 servings.



## Baked Falafel



Enjoy falafel (ground chickpea patties) in pita bread drizzled with tahini salad dressing (p. XX), sliced cucumbers, and tomatoes, or as a satisfying snack on their own. Falafel has become my favorite food to take with me on the ferry to Vancouver, as it is so easily portable and has great flavor. I also serve these patties at Indian tea parties with coconut, green, and tamarind chutneys (see pp. xx–xx), much the same way I would pakoras. Note: Cook chickpeas before preparing this recipe.

1 packed cup (250 mL) fresh cilantro, washed and well dried	4 cups (1 L) cooked yellow chickpeas
3 cups (750 mL) roughly chopped onions	2 tbsp lemon juice
3 garlic cloves, roughly chopped	2 tsp ground cumin
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <i>To reduce Pitta: use less or omit</i></li></ul>	1 tsp ground coriander
1 green chili, sliced in half lengthwise, leaving end intact	1 tsp good salt (p. xx)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <i>To reduce Pitta: use half or omit</i></li></ul>	1 tsp baking powder
	good oil (see p. xx) spray (or use pastry brush to lightly apply oil)
	½–1 cup (125–250 mL) spelt flour

Preheat oven to 350°F (180°C). In a food processor, purée cilantro. Add onions, garlic, and green chili and purée again. Add chickpeas 1 cup (250 mL) at a time, blending well before adding next cup. Add all remaining ingredients except oil and spelt flour. Spray a baking sheet with oil. By hand, add just enough spelt flour to the chickpea dough to allow you to form 2-in (5-cm) wide patties from each tbsp of mixture. (Amount of flour will depend on how dry chickpeas are once drained.) Place individual patties onto baking sheet. Spray each patty or brush with oil. Bake for 15 minutes, flip, then bake for another 15 minutes. Ayurveda does not recommend freezing; however, these can be frozen and used for lunches and snacks.

Makes about 30 patties.



## Black Chickpeas with Red Peppers & Zucchini



My friends who tasted this dish told me how much they liked the robust flavor of the black chickpeas—and that they were easy to digest. *Note:* Soak black chickpeas overnight (see p. xx).

*Many people prefer the taste of kala channa or black chickpeas and find them easier to digest than the conventional yellow kind. While this recipe will still work with the yellow chickpeas, it is easy to find kala channa at your local Indian grocery store.*

2 cups (500 mL) kala channa (black chickpeas)  
 6 cups (1.5 L) water  
 3 slices ginger, 1-in (2.5-cm) round and ¼-in (6-mm) thick  
 1 green chili, sliced in half lengthwise,

### Vagar:

½ cup (80 mL) good oil (see p. xx)  
 2 cups (500 mL) chopped red onions  
 1 serrano chili, minced  
 4 tsp minced ginger  
 1 tbsp minced garlic  
 1 tbsp ground cumin  
 1 tbsp ground coriander  
 ¼ tsp ground turmeric

leaving end intact (so it appears whole and can easily be removed before serving)

¼ tsp ground turmeric  
 1½ tsp good salt (p. xx)

1/8 tsp garam masala  
 1 cup (250 mL) uniformly chopped red bell peppers  
 1 cup (250 mL) sliced zucchini (1-in/2.5-cm thick rounds)  
 2 cups (500 mL) peeled (see p. xx) and diced tomatoes, with juices  
 3 tbsp tomato paste

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Drain and rinse soaked chickpeas. In a large pot on high, bring chickpeas and water to a boil. Reduce heat to medium-low, skim off foam with a slotted spoon and discard. Add ginger, chili, turmeric, and salt. In a medium pot on medium, heat oil. Add onions, serrano chili, and ginger and sauté for 4 minutes. Add garlic, cumin, coriander, turmeric, garam masala, bell peppers, and zucchini and sauté for another 4 minutes. Add tomatoes and tomato paste and continue to cook for 10 minutes. Stir vagar into the chickpeas and cook until they are soft, about 1 hour.

Makes 6 servings.



**Variation:** Add 1 cup (250 mL) coconut milk after chickpeas have cooked for about 50 minutes.



## Amrita's Rajma with Vegetables



Rajma was one of my favorite dishes at a great Indian restaurant that opened for a short while on Bowen Island. Lots of people asked me to include the recipe in this cookbook, so here is my version. Note: Soak beans overnight (see p. xx).

2 cups (500 mL) rajma (kidney or azuki beans), uncooked

• *To reduce Vata and Kapha: use 6 cups (1.5 L) cooked azuki beans*

6 cups (1.5 L) water

3 slices ginger, 1-in (2.5-cm) rounds,  
¼-in (6-mm) thick

¼ tsp ground turmeric

1 green chili, sliced in half lengthwise,  
leaving end intact (so it appears  
whole and can easily be removed  
before serving)

### Vagar:

1 tbsp coconut oil

3 cups (750 mL) chopped onions

1 tbsp minced ginger

1 tbsp ground cumin

½ tsp ground turmeric

cayenne, to taste

3 cups (750 mL) tomatoes, chopped  
with their juices

2 cups (500 mL) chopped red or  
yellow bell peppers

3 packed cups (750 mL) roughly  
chopped spinach

good salt (p. xx), to taste

4 tbsp lemon juice

½ tsp garam masala (optional)

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Drain and rinse soaked beans. In a large pot, bring beans and water to a boil. Skim off foam with a slotted spoon and discard. Add ginger, turmeric, and chili. Reduce heat to medium-low and simmer for about 1–1½ hours. Drain beans, reserving the cooking water, and set aside.

In another large pot on medium, heat oil. Add onions and caramelize for about 12 minutes. (If you are in a hurry, you can do this on higher heat in about 5 minutes, but you won't get all the sweetness of the slowly caramelized onions.) Halfway through, add ginger, cumin, turmeric, and cayenne. Once onions are caramelized, add tomatoes and cook for 5 minutes. Add bell peppers, spinach, salt, and cooked and drained beans. Stir to mix well and cook about 10–15 minutes. If extra liquid is needed, add reserved cooking water, 1 tbsp at a time. Stir in lemon juice, sprinkle with garam masala, and serve.

Makes 6–8 servings.



## Fawn's Spicy Rajma

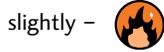


Fawn is, in her own words, “addicted” to rajma. She owns a gym on Bowen Island and says she feels replenished when she eats this dish after a workout. Fawn’s primary dosha is Pitta, and she loves this dish even though it is spicy! Remember that we don’t have to decrease spices in our foods unless we are out of balance. *Note:* Soak and cook beans before preparing recipe.

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| 1 tbsp good oil (see p. xx)                | 4 cups (1 L) chopped tomatoes                            |
| 1 tsp whole cumin seeds                    | 2 tsp ground coriander                                   |
| 3 cups (750 mL) chopped yellow onions      | 1 tsp ground cumin                                       |
| 4 tsp minced ginger                        | 1 tsp garam masala                                       |
| • <i>To reduce Pitta: use less or omit</i> | ¼ tsp ground turmeric                                    |
| 2 tbsp +1 tsp minced garlic                | 4 cups (1 L) cooked red kidney beans, rinsed and drained |
| • <i>To reduce Pitta: use less or omit</i> | • <i>To reduce Vata: use azuki beans</i>                 |
| 1 green chili, minced                      | 3 cups (750 mL) warm water                               |
| • <i>To reduce Pitta use less or omit</i>  |  |

In a large saucepan on medium-high, heat oil. Drop 1 cumin seed into the oil to test; if it sizzles and turns white, add rest of cumin seeds and let sizzle for 30 seconds. Add onions, ginger, garlic, and chili, and sauté until onions are browned, about 4 minutes. Add chopped tomatoes and remaining spices and stir-fry until fragrant. Add cooked beans and water and simmer for about 20 minutes, until sauce thickens.

Makes 6 servings.



## Mountain High Quesadilla Pie

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*The Doukhobors originated in Russia in the late 1700s and eventually spread across the Russian Empire. They were united by their belief in universal brotherhood.*

*To make your own refried beans, cook 1 cup (250 mL) soaked kidney or black beans in 2 cups (500 mL) water until soft, about 1½–2 hours.*

*Mash beans and sauté in good oil with 1 diced onion and half a green bell pepper, diced, salt and pepper to taste, and hot pepper (optional). You may also purée the bean dip recipe on p. Xx.]*

Stenya moved to Bowen Island to work with me at my eco-clothing store, Movement, soon after we met last summer. She grew up in the Doukhobor community, has been vegetarian all her life, and always enjoyed making this easy impressive dish with her mother. Serve it with organic plain yogurt or sour cream. Stenya says you can save the leftovers in the refrigerator for a tasty lunch later.

2 cups (500 mL) refried kidney beans

- *To reduce Kapha: use black beans*

1/2 cup (125 mL) tomato salsa (p. XX)

2 cups (500 mL) ricotta cheese

3 packed cups (750 mL) chopped spinach

1–3 garlic cloves, minced

- *To reduce Pitta: use less*

8–10 medium whole-wheat tortillas

1 tomato, sliced

1 cup (250 mL) grated old cheddar cheese

- *To reduce Kapha: use mozzarella*

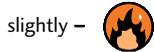
1 cup (250 mL) organic plain yogurt or sour cream

- *To reduce Kapha: use sour cream*

Preheat oven to 375°F (190°C). In a bowl, combine refried beans and salsa and set aside. In another bowl, combine ricotta cheese, spinach, and garlic.

On a lightly oiled cookie sheet or pizza pan, place 1 tortilla and spread with thin layer of the bean/salsa mix. Then place another tortilla over it and spread with thin layer of cheese/spinach mixture. Alternate until all ingredients are used. You will have built an impressive pie at this point. Place the sliced tomatoes on top layer and sprinkle with cheese. Bake for about 30 minutes, or until cheese melts. Remove from oven, let cool for 5 minutes, then slice in wedges and serve each wedge with a dollop of yogurt or sour cream.

Makes 4–6 servings.



## Mary's Bodacious Bean Burritos

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Mary is the owner of Positively Fit, a gym on Bowen Island where I teach yoga twice a week. I asked her for one of her favorite vegetarian recipes and she offered this gem. Not only are these burritos delicious, inexpensive, and healthy, but they are easy to prepare in advance. They freeze well (even though Ayurveda does not recommend frozen food) and do not need to be individually wrapped. I really enjoyed them topped with yogurt, salsa, and sliced avocados, accompanied by a salad—it made a lovely, easy meal. Thanks, Mary!

- |   |                                       |
|---|---------------------------------------|
| 4 cups (1 L) cooked kidney beans                  | 1 cup (250 mL) chopped fresh cilantro |
| • <i>To reduce Vata: use a cooked azuki beans</i> | 2 tbsp lime juice                     |
| 3 tbsp Mexican chili powder                       | 1½ tsp good salt (p. xx)              |
| 1 tbsp ground cumin                               | 12 sprouted-grain large tortillas     |
|   | 12 oz (340 g) mozzarella cheese       |

Preheat oven to 375°F (190°C). In a food processor, purée all ingredients except tortillas and cheese. Slice cheese evenly into 12 pieces. Place one slice on each tortilla. Top with puréed bean mixture. Fold tortillas in half, place on an ungreased baking sheet, and bake for 25 minutes.

Makes 12 burritos.

