

MEATLESS MEATLOAF (aka LENTIL LOAF)

INGREDIENTS:

1 cup dried green (or brown) lentils
2 cups water
2 Tbsp olive oil, separated
1/2 medium onion, chopped fine
1 carrot, grated fine
2 cloves garlic, minced
1/2 cup breadcrumbs, plain or seasoned
2 large eggs
1 cup vegetable broth/stock
2 Tbsp tomato paste
1/2 tsp coriander
1/2 tsp black pepper
1/2 cup parsley, chopped
1/4 grated parmesan cheese

DIRECTIONS:

1. Preheat oven to 400 degrees.
2. Bring lentils to a boil over medium-high (50%) heat. Reduce heat and simmer for about 30 minutes or until tender.
3. Drain lentils, if necessary, transfer to a bowl and gently mash together. Can also use a potato masher. Lentils do not all have to be mashed into a uniform paste.
4. Spray 9" X 5" loaf pan with non-stick spray.
5. Heat (medium-high) a small-medium skillet then add 1 Tbsp olive oil. Sauté onion, carrot and garlic for about 3 - 5 minutes.
6. In a large bowl, combine lentils, breadcrumbs, eggs, vegetable stock, tomato paste, coriander, pepper, parsley, 1 Tbsp olive oil and sautéed vegetables. Mix well and press mixture into loaf pan.
7. Bake for 40 minutes and remove. Sprinkle parmesan cheese over top and return to oven for 10 minutes more (50 minutes total baking time).
8. Let cool 10 minutes or more before slicing.

TIPS:

I ran a thin spatula around the edges after removing it from the oven, but, I didn't try to remove the loaf from the pan before slicing because I wasn't sure how well (or if) it would hold together.

I waited for about 30 minutes before slicing and it came out okay, but you still have to be careful. It was much better the next day after I let it cool overnight in the refrigerator, but I still left it in the pan.

The loaf was rather bland for my taste, but a vegetarian friend of mine liked it quite a bit. I put some extra sharp cheddar cheese on top before re-heating it in the microwave and that helped. I suggest adjusting your spices to taste - this can be a very flexible recipe in that aspect. I think next time I may add a couple of more cloves of garlic, some salt, Cajun spice mixture and red pepper flakes for some extra flavor.

Lots of fiber in this recipe, if you know what I mean! ;-)

You can also try using Morningstar Crumbles, Beyond or Impossible ground meat in this recipe - just prepare it as you would if using regular ground beef.

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