

# THE SHARED TABLE

Vegetarian and vegan feasts  
to cook for your crowd

A Cookbook by  
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## LENTIL AND MUSHROOM BOLOGNESE

Like so many families, mine ate ‘spag bol’ at least once a week when I was growing up. It’s still one of my favourite pasta dishes. This version is pretty different from a traditional meat sauce in taste and texture, but provides that same familiar, warm, tomatoey flavour. I love the addition of mushrooms, as they give a real heartiness, and the red wine helps bubble up that authentic bolognese aroma. This bolognese is delicious in jaffles, perfect for freezing, and even more flavoursome after a day in the fridge.

Serves 8 • vegan, gluten free, leftovers friendly, freezer friendly

### INGREDIENTS:

750 ml (25½ fl oz/3 cups) vegetable stock (see Note)

500 g (1 lb 2 oz/2 cups) dried split red lentils (see Note)

2 tbsp olive oil, plus extra for drizzling

1 large brown onion, diced

2 carrots, finely diced

2 celery stalks, finely diced

4 garlic cloves, crushed

300 g (10½ oz) mushrooms, diced

2 tsp dried oregano

2 tsp dried basil

2 × 400 g (14 oz) tins good-quality tomatoes (I love cherry tomatoes in this recipe)

125 ml (4 fl oz/½ cup) red wine

2 tsp caster (superfine) sugar

500 g (1 lb 2 oz) pasta of your choice

grated parmesan (or vegan cheese/nutritional yeast), to serve

basil leaves, to serve

### METHOD:

Heat the stock in a saucepan until warm, then add the dried lentils. Bring to the boil and cook until all the water is absorbed and the lentils are soft; this usually only takes about 10–20 minutes, so keep an eye on them.

Meanwhile, in a large saucepan, heat the olive oil and fry the onion over medium heat for a few minutes, stirring often. Add the carrots and celery, along with an extra swig of olive oil and a pinch of salt. Cook for about 10–20 minutes, stirring every couple of minutes until the vegies are browning and reduced. Don’t worry if they’re sticking to the pan a little.

Stir in the garlic, mushrooms and dried herbs and cook for another 5 minutes.

Add the cooked lentils to the pan, along with the tinned tomatoes, wine and sugar, then stir to combine. Reduce the heat to low and simmer, stirring occasionally to prevent sticking, for about 30 minutes, until the sauce has thickened and deepened in colour. Season the sauce to taste.

While the sauce is simmering, cook the pasta in a large saucepan of boiling, salted water until *al dente*.

Serve the pasta topped with the bolognese sauce, grated parmesan and basil leaves.

Notes: Homemade stock is great, if you happen to have some. Alternatively, you can dissolve 2 stock cubes in 750 ml (25½ fl oz/3 cups) water.

You can use tinned lentils if you like. They change the texture significantly, but are equally delicious. Replace the red lentils and stock with 3 × 400 g (14 oz) tins of drained brown lentils, and add them with the tinned tomatoes.