

# Lentils (Daal) with Fried Lemon and Garlic

4–6 servings

While red, yellow or brown lentils/daal would work here (black and green will never fully achieve that porridge-like texture, so I would not use them here), I prefer yellow or red because I am superficial and I think those are the most gorgeous quick-cooking lentils (in the finished dish they look nearly identical— the ones pictured here are actually red, not yellow). That said, I also have a huge soft spot for split pea soup (made with dried, split peas), one of the most gentle and hideous foods I know.

**3 tablespoons coconut oil or olive oil plus more for drizzling (ghee or melted butter would be good if you are not going the vegan route)**

**4 garlic cloves, thinly sliced**

**1/2 lemon, thinly sliced into little half-moons, seeds removed**

**3 scallions, thinly sliced (I also recently used most of an old leek and that worked, too)**

**1/4 cup finely chopped cilantro stem (if stems aren't available to you, the leaves will work but the flavor will be a bit milder, which perhaps you like)**

**1/4 teaspoon turmeric (I think the Pragati turmeric from Diaspora is the best you can buy), optional but recommended**

**1 cup dried red or yellow lentils/daal**

1. Heat oil in a medium pot over medium heat. Add garlic and half the lemon slices (save the remaining for adding at the end). Cook, stirring occasionally until the garlic is toasted and turning golden brown while the edges of the lemon slices fry and caramelize alongside, 3 to 4 minutes.
2. Add most of the scallion and cilantro stem, saving about 1/4 of each for topping. Season with salt and stir, just to briefly sizzle and soften the scallion and stems. Add the turmeric and sizzle a minute or so, to toast the spice.
3. Add the lentils along with 4 cups of water (you can absolutely use any vegetable/chicken broth or stock you have on hand, but water really does work beautifully). Season again with salt and bring to a simmer.
4. Cook, stirring occasionally, until the lentils are fully cooked, tender, falling apart, and have a creamy, almost pureed texture. Season with salt as you go. If you want these to be more “soup-like” you can cook them slightly less and leave them on the thinner side (I like mine the way I like my congee, oatmeal, or polenta which is to say thick enough to coat the back of a spoon, but thin enough to eat with a spoon).
5. Remove from heat and spoon into a bowl for serving. Top with a little bit of raw lemon slice, some scallion, and cilantro stems, followed by a drizzle of whatever oil you were cooking with. If you want to season with black pepper (I like to) that's nice.