

I cook this at least once a week and even have it for breakfast. It's basically love in a bowl. This recipe, like many others, I learned from my mum. The best thing about it is that it is different every time and is full of good turmeric. Also, a very forgiving dish. Simply add what you fancy on the day.

Ingredients (serves 4)

For the dhal:

- 1 cup red lentils, rinsed
- 2 cups water
- 1 organic stock cube
- 1 bay leaf (optional)
- $\frac{1}{2}$ tsp sea salt (or to taste)
- 1 tsp ground turmeric (I use fresh turmeric but that can get a little messy)

For the tarka:

- 3 tbs ghee or good oil
- 2 onion, sliced
- 6 garlic cloves, minced
- 1 tsp ground turmeric
- 1 tsp nigella seeds
- 1 tsp cumin seeds

For the toppings:

- Squeeze of lemon
- Scoop of yogurt
- Fresh coriander & chilli
- A handful of pomegranate seeds

Method

1. Simmer the lentils

Add the rinsed lentils and cover with 2 cups of water. Add the stock cube, turmeric and bay leaf. Bring to a gentle boil, then reduce the heat and simmer. Cover for 20–25 minutes or until the lentils are soft and the dhal is thick. Keep an eye on this and add more water (it drinks so much).

2. The tarka

Heat the oil in a large saucepan over medium heat. Add the spices and let them cook and release their oils a few seconds. Then stir in the onion and garlic and cook gently for 5–8 minutes, until soft and golden. This is the chance to flavour so if you are using tomatoes, ginger etc then this is the time to flavour the tarka.

3. Add the tarka to the lentils

The tarka should be nice and hot and there should be plenty of oil. It should spit when you

add the hot flavoured oil to the lentils. Take care when doing this. Let it cook for 5 minutes.

4. Serve

Ladle into bowls and top a spoonful of yogurt, squeeze of lemon, pomegranate seeds, herbs and chilli. It's perfect on its own, or served with flatbreads, rice. Or if you are like me on toast.

Notes from Bina: The pomegranate adds delicious sweet bursts of flavour - highly recommended. You can swap red lentils for yellow split peas or moong dal - just adjust watch that the dhal doesn't dry up and add water and more time, as needed. Tarka means seasoning so do not skimp on the flavour or oil.