

LENTIL-MUSHROOM BOLOGNESE

Serves 6-8

(The nut butter is optional but it does lend a savoury creaminess that is well-regarded)

2 Tbsp extra-virgin olive oil
1 medium sweet onion, diced
3 large cloves garlic, minced
¼ to ¾ tsp fine sea salt, to taste, plus a pinch
450g sliced cremini mushrooms
1 tsp dried oregano, or to taste
1 tsp dried basil, or to taste
1 tsp dried thyme
450g dry-weight pasta
3 cups chunky marinara sauce
1x 398mL can lentils, drained and rinsed, or 1½ cups cooked lentils
¾ cup jarred roasted red pepper, drained and chopped
2 Tbsp tahini, sunflower, or almond butter, runny if possible
½ tsp freshly ground black pepper
½ tsp red pepper flakes (optional, but recommended)

In a large Dutch oven or saucepan, heat the oil over medium heat. Add the onion, garlic, and a pinch of salt and stir. Sauté for 4 to 5 minutes, until the onion is softened.

Stir in the mushrooms, oregano, basil, and thyme and cook for 7 to 8 minutes over medium-high heat, until most of the water cooks off.

Meanwhile bring water for the pasta to a boil, then add the pasta and cook until al dente, following package directions.

Into the pot with the mushrooms, stir in the marinara sauce, lentils, roasted red pepper, and tahini until combined. Make sure you stir well to fully incorporate the tahini. Simmer over medium heat, uncovered, for a few more minutes.

Drain the pasta and rinse it with cold water to halt the cooking process. Stir the pasta into the lentil-veggie mixture until thoroughly combined. Taste and season with salt, black pepper, and red pepper flakes (if using). Heat for a couple of minutes, or until heated throughout.

Serve and enjoy.

Leftovers can be stored in an airtight container in the fridge for up to 5 days. The leftovers are even delicious chilled, straight from the fridge! You can also freeze the cooled pasta in an airtight container or a freezer-safe zip-top bag with the air pressed out for 2 to 3 weeks. After thawing, add a splash of marinara and seasonings to the pasta while reheating to freshen it up.