Nancy’s Vegetarian Lentil Soup with Tomatoes

**NOTE:** I don’t measure ingredients for soup, and you don’t need to either. The quantities listed here are approximate. Have fun experimenting; lentil soups are very versatile!

1-2 tbsp olive oil
1-2 onions, finely chopped
2-3 cloves (not heads) of garlic, finely minced or pressed through a garlic press
2 celery stalks, chopped
2-3 carrots, peeled and chopped
1-3 tsp dried thyme
1-3 tsp dried oregano
1 pound of lentils (1 packaged bag from the supermarket)
1 large can chopped tomatoes, including liquid
4 cups vegetable stock (this is also good with chicken broth)
2 tbsp soy sauce
Salt and pepper to taste
Water as needed

1. In a large pot heat olive oil. I usually use a non-stick pot. Add onion and garlic and cook until it is translucent, about 5 minutes. Add celery and carrots and cook until they begin to soften, another 5 minutes.

2. Add herbs and lentils and stir until lentils are coated. Cook for a minute.

3. Add tomatoes, stock, and soy sauce.

4. Heat to boiling, then reduce heat and simmer and cook until lentils have softened and are cooked through, about 35 to 40 minutes; you’ll know when they’re done when they are soft but not mushy.

5. Add salt and ground black pepper to taste. Add water if necessary.

6. I sometimes use an immersion blender and puree the soup a little bit, but this isn’t necessary. If you use the immersion blender, be sure to leave some whole lentils and chunks of vegetables.

7. Serve with grated parmesan or other cheese, if you like.

Eat and enjoy!