



mushroom + lentil ragu

Plant-based · gluten-free · dairy-free
full of fibre and vitamin D

Ideally, slice and expose your mushrooms to sunlight for a few hours (up to 6) before cooking to optimise vitamin D (see info on reverse!)

Also, soak the lentils for a few hours prior to cooking. Drain and rinse well. This reduces enzyme inhibitors and increases nutrient bioavailability.

Heat the olive oil in a large pan over medium heat. Add the onion, carrots and celery. Sauté for 3-5 minutes, until the onion starts to turn translucent.

Add the mushrooms and continue cooking for about 5 minutes. Add the tamari sauce, garlic and lentils and cook for another minute, stirring frequently. It will start to smell amazing!

Add the wine and cook for a minute until most of it has evaporated. Then add in the tomatoes, vegetable broth, tomato paste, bay leaf, thyme, paprika and salt. Stir to combine and bring it to a boil. Reduce it to a simmer, cover the pan and cook for 30 to 35 minutes until the lentils are tender (if you soaked the lentils this may take less time.)

If the sauce becomes too thick, add more veggie broth, water or wine. Taste and adjust seasonings as needed. Remove the bay leaf at the end and stir in the pine nuts (optional).

Start to cook the pasta in a large pot of salted water according to package instructions around 15 minutes before the sauce is done. Once the pasta is al dente, drain the cooking water and toss in a little bit of olive oil (optional, to prevent from sticking). Quinoa or brown rice work well too.

Serve the pasta (or quinoa/rice) with the mushroom and lentil ragu and garnish with fresh basil. The chopped avocado is optional but a really delicious addition. If you're not vegan, you could add chopped, lean English-cut bacon (ask our butchers for a recommendation.) Enjoy!

 Nutrifit approved recipe

Written by our in-house Nutritionist, Catherine Burns. For more information on boosting your respiratory immunity, please visit the [Community Resources](#) section on the Waterfront Wellness website



- 1-2 tbsp light olive oil for sauté
- 1 onion, finely chopped
- 1 large carrot, washed and finely chopped
- 1 stick celery, finely chopped
- 8 oz mushrooms, finely sliced
- 2 tbsp low-sodium tamari sauce
- 3 cloves garlic, crushed minced
- 1/2 cup puy or green lentils (dried)
- 1/2 cup red wine, or sub veggie broth
- 1 14 oz can diced tomatoes (or passata/whole crushed tomatoes)
- 1 cup vegetable broth, or more as needed
- 2 tbsp tomato paste
- 1 bay leaf
- 1 tsp dried thyme leaves
- 1 tsp smoked paprika powder
- 1/4 tsp salt (adjust to taste)
- 1/4 cup pine nuts (optional)
- 4 servings gluten-free pasta or sub quinoa/brown rice
- 2 tsps fresh basil (garnish)
- 1 avocado (diced, garnish)

sunny mushrooms for plant-based vitamin D!

Vitamin D is incredibly helpful for boosting respiratory immunity. We know that vitamin D is important for strong bones, brain development, general disease prevention and dental health, but its impact on respiratory function was under-stated before COVID-19.

However, one of the issues surrounding vitamin D is that we can't actually get enough safely from sunlight (due to the risks from sun exposure.) It's still important to cover up and use sunscreen when you're out in the sun for any length of time. So, it's helpful to get some vitamin D from your diet. This is where eggs, full-fat organic dairy and salmon come in. However, what if you don't eat animal products? Plant-based diets have become hugely popular, so where does that leave our vegan friends?

The good news is that recent research (led by Michael F. Holick who heads up the Vitamin D, Skin and Bone Research lab at Boston University) shows us that mushrooms can be great source of Vitamin D – but importantly – this is really only when they have been exposed to sunlight.

In the same way that our skin synthesizes vitamin D when exposed to sunlight, so too do mushrooms. This vitamin D is very bioavailable, meaning that it is easily absorbed and assimilated within the human body. It's stable at temperatures up to 400-500F, which means it survives cooking well.

If you slice your mushrooms, you will increase the surface area which means even more vitamin D generation. Please note: if you're making this for the vitamin D content, then leave your mushrooms to soak up some sunlight for up to 6 hours (although any sunlight is good.) We do recommend that most people supplement vitamin D at approximately 1000ius daily too; this is especially important for people following a plant-based diet (who may also need extra B12, iron and other supplements too.)

Always discuss supplementation with your doctor, especially if you have a medical condition, are taking medications or are following a specialized diet. You can also consult with Catherine Burns, our in-house Nutritionist and AVP over at Waterfront Wellness. For consultation details, please visit [our website](#).

