

PASTA & LENTILS (Creamy One-Pot Italian Style)

Cooking Times & Servings

- **Prep Time:** 10 minutes (plus soaking time)
 - **Cook Time:** 40 minutes
 - **Servings:** 4
 - **Difficulty:** Easy
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Ingredients

- **1 cup dried lentils** (soaked)
 - **12 oz short pasta** (ditalini, small tubes, or mixed small pasta)
 - **1 medium carrot**, finely chopped
 - **1 celery stalk**, finely chopped
 - **1 small onion**, finely chopped
 - **2 Tbsp extra virgin olive oil**, plus more for finishing
 - **2/3 cup tomato passata** (or plain tomato purée)
 - **1 sprig fresh rosemary**
 - **1 bay leaf**
 - **6 1/3 cups hot vegetable broth**, plus extra as needed
 - **Salt & black pepper**, to taste
 - **Grated Parmigiano Reggiano**, optional for serving
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Instructions

1. **Soak the lentils.**
Place dried lentils in cold water and soak for **at least 2 hours** (or follow your package directions). Drain and rinse well.
 2. **Build the flavor base (soffritto).**
In a large Dutch oven or heavy pot, warm **2 Tbsp olive oil** over medium heat. Add **carrot, celery, and onion**. Cook gently for **4–5 minutes**, stirring often. Add **rosemary** and **bay leaf**.
 3. **Add tomato + lentils.**
Stir in the rinsed lentils and **tomato passata**. Mix well. Pour in **most of the hot broth** (hold back about **1–2 cups** for later).
 4. **Simmer until tender.**
Bring to a boil, then reduce heat to low and simmer for about **30 minutes**, until lentils are tender but not mushy. If the pot gets too dry, add a splash of hot broth.
 5. **Make it creamy (no cream!).**
Remove the **rosemary sprig and bay leaf**. Use an immersion blender to blend **about 1/3 of the lentil mixture** directly in the pot (or transfer a portion to a blender, then return it). This creates a naturally creamy texture.
 6. **Cook the pasta in the same pot.**
Add the pasta straight into the pot. Add enough **hot broth** to *just barely cover the pasta*. Cook **10–13 minutes** (or until al dente), stirring often so it doesn't stick. Add more broth as needed to keep it creamy.
 7. **Finish and serve.**
Taste and adjust **salt and black pepper**. Drizzle with a little **extra virgin olive oil**. Serve hot with **Parmigiano Reggiano** if you like.
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Tips & Tricks

- **Extra silky:** mash a few lentils against the side of the pot while simmering (or blend a bit more).
- **More “soupy”:** add an extra ladle of hot broth (or water) at the end.
- **Even better next day:** it thickens as it sits—reheat gently with a splash of broth to bring back the creaminess.