

CHICKPEA SOUP WITH ARUGULA

SERVES 4 TO 6

ACTIVE TIME: 20 MIN START TO FINISH: 40 MIN

Chickpeas add meaty body to a home-style vegetable soup; round out the flavors with a sprinkling of grated cheese.

- 1 large onion, finely chopped
- 2 medium carrots, thinly sliced crosswise
- 1 celery rib (from inner part of bunch), thinly sliced
- 3 garlic cloves, finely chopped
- 1 Turkish or ½ California bay leaf
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 3 tablespoons olive oil
- 1 tablespoon tomato paste
- 2 cups reduced-sodium chicken broth (16 fl oz)
- 2 cups water
- 1 (19-oz) can chickpeas (2 cups), rinsed and drained
- ½ teaspoon black pepper
- 5 oz baby arugula (8 cups loosely packed)

ACCOMPANIMENTS: coarsely ground black pepper; finely grated Parmigiano-Reggiano

► Cook onion, carrots, celery, garlic, and bay leaf with ½ teaspoon salt in oil in a wide 5- to 6-quart heavy pot over moderately high heat, stirring occasionally, until vegetables are softened, about 5 minutes. Stir in tomato paste and cook, stirring, 1 minute. Add broth, water,

chickpeas, ¼ teaspoon pepper, and remaining ½ teaspoon salt and simmer briskly, covered, until vegetables are tender, about 15 minutes.

► Discard bay leaf. Transfer 1 cup soup to a blender and purée, then stir back into soup. Stir in arugula and remaining ¼ teaspoon pepper and cook just until arugula is wilted, about 1 minute.

SAUSAGE AND LENTILS WITH FENNEL

SERVES 4 (MAIN COURSE)

ACTIVE TIME: 35 MIN START TO FINISH: 45 MIN

A fennel trifecta—you'll find that the sweet fronds, bulb, and seeds mix harmoniously in this dish.

- 1 cup dried lentils (preferably French green lentils; 7 oz)
- 4½ cups cold water
- 1½ teaspoons salt
- 1 medium (¾-lb) fennel bulb (sometimes labeled "anise"), stalks discarded, reserving fronds
- 3½ tablespoons olive oil
- 1 medium onion, finely chopped
- 1 carrot, cut into ¼-inch dice
- ½ teaspoon fennel seeds
- 1¼ lb sweet Italian sausage links
- 3 tablespoons chopped fresh flat-leaf parsley
- ½ teaspoon black pepper
- 1 tablespoon red-wine vinegar, or to taste
- Extra-virgin olive oil for drizzling

► Bring lentils, water, and ½ teaspoon salt to a boil in a 2-quart heavy saucepan, then reduce heat and simmer, uncovered, until lentils are just tender but not falling apart, 12 to 25 minutes.

► While lentils simmer, cut fennel bulb into ¼-inch dice and chop enough fennel fronds to measure 2 tablespoons. Heat 3 tablespoons oil in a 3- to 4-quart heavy saucepan over moderate heat until hot but not smoking, then stir in onion, carrot, fennel bulb, fennel seeds, and remaining teaspoon salt. Cover pan and cook, stirring occasionally, until vegetables are very tender, about 10 minutes.

► Meanwhile, lightly prick sausages in a couple of places with tip of a sharp knife, then cook sausages in remaining ½ tablespoon oil in a 10-inch nonstick skillet over moderately high heat, turning occasionally, until golden brown and cooked through, 12 to 15 minutes. Transfer to a cutting board.

► Drain cooked lentils in a sieve set over a bowl and reserve cooking water. Stir lentils into vegetables with enough cooking water to moisten (¼ to ½ cup) and cook over moderate heat until heated through. Stir in parsley, pepper, 1 tablespoon vinegar, and 1 tablespoon fennel fronds. Season with vinegar and salt.

► Cut sausages diagonally into ½-inch-thick slices. Serve lentils topped with sausage and sprinkled with remaining tablespoon fennel fronds. Drizzle all over with extra-virgin olive oil.

For more EVERY DAY recipes, see page 104.

Sweet Italian sausage, tender fennel, and rustic French lentils come together in a full-bodied dish to warm the chilliest winter night.

