



ITALIAN SAUSAGES WITH LENTILS

Serves: 4

My mother used English sausages mostly, and those flat, sludgy lentils (Puy lentils weren't so easily available then) but this is at its best made with highly flavoured Italian sausages (I love the ones tagged 'Genovese', deep with garlic and basil) and either French Puy lentils or the similar Italian ones from Umbria.

This incidentally, is what Italians serve traditionally on New Year's Day; the coin-shaped lentils symbolise the prosperity that is hoped for over the coming year, much as Jewish tradition uses honey richly for the Rosh Hashanah meal to represent the wish for a sweet and happy life for the year ahead.

Recipe posted by Nigella

Ingredients

- 3 - 4 tablespoons olive oil (not extra virgin)
 - 1 onion (finely chopped)
 - 1 sprinkling of salt
 - 3 cups puy lentils
 - 1 fat clove garlic (squished with the side of a knife and skin removed)
 - 8 italian sausages
 - 1/2 cup red wine or vermouth
 - 3 tablespoons water
 - 1 sprinkling of fresh italian parsley
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Method

1. To cook the lentils, put 2-3 tablespoons of the oil into a good-sized saucepan (and one which has a lid that fits) on the heat and when it's warm add the chopped onion. Sprinkle with salt (which helps

prevents it browning) and cook over a low to medium heat till soft (about 5 minutes). Add the lentils, stir well and then cover generously with cold water. Bring to the boil, then cover and let simmer gently for half an hour or so until cooked and most, if not all, the liquid's absorbed. I don't add salt at this stage since the sauce provided by the sausages later (and which will be poured over the lentils) will be pretty salty itself. So, wait and taste. And remember, you can of course cook the lentils in advance.

2. Anyway, when either the lentils are nearly ready or you're about to reheat them, put a heavy-based frying pan on the hob, cover with a film of oil and add the bruised garlic. Cook for a few minutes then add and brown the sausages. When the sausages are brown on both sides - which won't take more than 5 minutes or so - throw in the wine and water and let bubble up. Cover the pan, either with a lid or tin foil, and cook for about 15 minutes. Using a fork, mash the now-soft garlic into the sauce and taste for seasoning, adding a little more water if it's too strong.
 3. Remove the lentils to a shallowish bowl or dish (I evacuate the sausages from their cooking pan, plonk the lentils in, then proceed) then cover with the sausages and their garlicky, winey gravy. Sprinkle over some parsley.
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