

## MEATLESS MEATBALLS

There's nothing like a meatball and these veggie versions have just the same lovely comforting mouthfeel as the meaty kind. This makes a fab supper dish that all the family will love.

Serves 4 | 249 calories per serving; 337 calories with sauce

Prep: 25 minutes | Cooking time: up 50 minutes

100g brown lentils  
1 tbsp olive oil  
1 small onion,  
finely chopped  
1 medium carrot, grated  
100g spinach or  
chard, washed and  
finely shredded  
1 garlic clove,  
finely chopped  
1 tsp cumin  
½ tsp cinnamon  
½ tsp cardamom  
50g breadcrumbs  
25g pine nuts, lightly  
crushed  
zest and juice of 1 lemon  
2 tbsp finely chopped  
parsley  
1 egg, beaten  
sea salt and black pepper

### Sauce

1 quantity of tomato  
sauce  
1 tbsp harissa paste  
small bunch of parsley,  
finely chopped  
squeeze of lemon juice

First cook the brown lentils according to the packet instructions and set them aside in a bowl. If using ready-cooked lentils, you need 250g.

Preheat the oven to 200°C/Fan 180°C/Gas 6. Heat the olive oil in a frying pan and add the onion and carrot. Cook them over a low heat until the onion has softened, then add the spinach or chard. Continue to cook until the greens have wilted and softened – if using spinach, cook it until any liquid evaporates. Add the garlic and cook for another minute, then add the spices. Season with salt and pepper.

Add the breadcrumbs, pine nuts, lemon zest and juice and the parsley to the bowl with the lentils, then the cooked vegetables. Stir in the egg and the mixture should clump together. Form the mixture into 12 balls of about 40g each and arrange them on a baking tray. Bake them in the oven for 10–12 minutes until lightly browned.

Put the tomato sauce in a large, shallow flameproof casserole dish or a deep frying pan and stir in the harissa paste, some of the parsley and a squeeze of lemon juice. Add the lentil and spinach balls in a single layer. Cover the dish with a lid and heat through on the hob for a few minutes until everything is piping hot. Sprinkle with the rest of the parsley and serve at once.