



30–45ml/2–3 tbsp olive or sunflower oil  
 1 large onion, finely chopped  
 2 garlic cloves, finely chopped  
 1 fresh red chilli, seeded and finely chopped  
 5–10ml/1–2 tsp cumin seeds  
 5–10ml/1–2 tsp coriander seeds  
 1 carrot, finely chopped  
 scant 5ml/1 tsp ground fenugreek  
 5ml/1 tsp sugar  
 15ml/1 tbsp tomato purée (paste)  
 250g/9oz/generous 1 cup split red lentils  
 1.75 litres/3 pints/7½ cups chicken stock  
 salt and ground black pepper

#### TO SERVE

1 small red onion, finely chopped  
 1 large bunch of fresh flat leaf parsley, finely chopped  
 4–6 lemon wedges

**SERVES 4–6**

## spicy red lentil soup with onion and parsley

In Istanbul and Izmir, lentil soups are light and subtly spiced, and served as an appetizer or as a snack. In Anatolia, lentil and bean soups are made with chunks of mutton and flavoured with tomato and spices, and are usually served as a meal on their own.

- 1 Heat the oil in a heavy pan and stir in the onion, garlic, chilli, cumin and coriander seeds. When the onion begins to colour, toss in the carrot and cook for 2–3 minutes. Add the fenugreek, sugar and tomato purée and stir in the lentils.
- 2 Pour in the stock, stir well and bring to the boil. Lower the heat, partially cover the pan and simmer for 30–40 minutes, until the lentils have broken up.
- 3 If the soup is too thick, thin it down with a little water. Season with salt and pepper to taste.
- 4 Serve the soup straight from the pan or, if you prefer a smooth texture, whiz it in a blender, then reheat if necessary. Ladle the soup into bowls and sprinkle liberally with the chopped onion and parsley. Serve with a wedge of lemon to squeeze over the soup.

