 **Vegetable Lentil Stew** 

**Makes 6 servings**

2 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil
1 yellow onion, diced small
Sea salt
2 carrots, peeled and diced small
8 oz shiitake mushrooms, sliced
2 tablespoons mushroom powder
1 tablespoon minced garlic
½ teaspoon dried thyme
½ teaspoon dried oregano
¼ teaspoon freshly ground black pepper
1 cup red wine
2 tablespoons tomato paste
1 (14.5-ounce) can diced tomatoes, drained
1 cup dried green lentils, rinsed well (see note)
7 cups low sodium vegetable broth
1 bay leaf
2½ cups stemmed and chopped Swiss chard, in bite-size pieces, (can substitute fresh or frozen spinach)

1 cup frozen green beans, cut

½ head cauliflower, riced

Heat the olive oil in a large skillet over medium heat. Add the onion and a pinch of salt and sauté until translucent, about 4 minutes. Add the carrot, cauliflower, mushrooms, and another pinch of salt and sauté until all of the vegetables are tender and becoming deep golden brown, about 12 minutes. Add the garlic and sauté for about 30 seconds, then stir in the mushroom powder, thyme, oregano, pepper, and 1/4 teaspoon of salt. Pour in the wine to deglaze the skillet, stirring to loosen any bits stuck to the pan. Cook until the liquid is reduced by half. Stir in the tomato paste, tomatoes, and lentils. Add the broth and the bay leaf. Increase the heat to high and bring to a boil. Decrease the heat to low, cover, and simmer until the lentils are tender, about 20 minutes.

Taste; you may want to add a spritz of lemon juice or a pinch of salt. Stir in the Swiss chard (or spinach), green beans, and riced cauliflower, cook until tender, about 4 minutes.

Variations: You can substitute 1 cup of broth for the wine

*Cook’s Note: You don’t have to presoak lentils, but rinse them well in a bowl of cold water and use your hands to swish them around. Drain and repeat until the water is clear. Don’t boil lentils, which makes them mushy and tends to cause them to fall apart. Let the lentils simmer for a nice, tender texture.*

*This recipe is adapted from Rebecca Katz’s “Rustic Lentil Stew”*