

Red Lentil Kofte with Apple & Pomegranate

Inspired by Ferda Erdinc owner of Zencifil Restaurant, Istanbul

By Ana Sortun, Chef/Owner Oleana

8 Kofte
2 tablespoons unsalted butter
1 medium white onion, minced
1 carrot, finely chopped
1 tablespoon tomato paste
1 teaspoon ground cumin
2 teaspoons hot paprika
1 cup red lentils, picked over and rinsed
4 cups water
1 cup fine ground bulgur
Salt and freshly ground pepper
1 small red onion, finely minced
1 medium apple—peeled, halved, seeded and finely diced
6 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil
1 ½ tablespoons fresh lemon juice
1 tablespoon pomegranate molasses (optional)
¼ cup pomegranate seeds (about ½ pomegranate)

Melt the butter in a medium saucepan. Add the white onion and carrot. Cook over moderate heat, stirring occasionally, until softened, about 5 minutes. Stir in the tomato paste, cumin, paprika, then add the lentils and water and bring to a boil. Simmer over moderate heat until the lentils are tender and have absorbed about ¾ of the liquid, about 8 minutes. Stir in the bulgur and remove from heat. Let stand until the liquid is absorbed and the bulgur is softened, about 20 minutes. Season with salt and pepper. Transfer the lentil mixture to a rimmed baking sheet and spread in an even layer to cool.

Form into little patties, making a thumbprint in the center of each to catch juice from the apple salad.

In a small bowl, whisk the olive oil with the lemon juice and pomegranate molasses. Pour all but 2 tablespoons of the dressing over the apples, season with salt and pepper and toss. Stir in 2 tablespoons of the parsley.

In a large bowl, toss the romaine with the remaining 2 tablespoons of dressing and arrange on a large platter. Set the kofte on the lettuce.

Spoon the salad on top and sprinkle with the remaining parsley and serve.