Spiced Red Lentil Stew

7 cups water
2 cups red lentils
1 ½ inch ginger, peeled and minced
4 ½ teaspoons ground coriander
2 ½ teaspoons ground cumin
2 teaspoons paprika
3/4 teaspoon turmeric
6 small potatoes, steamed and diced
2 teaspoons honey
2 ½ teaspoons salt
Pinch asafoetida* (optional)

3 tablespoons butter
1 onion, finely chopped
4 scallions, sliced
2 carrots, diced
¼ teaspoon black pepper
6 cardamom pods
4 cinnamon sticks
8 cloves
4 bay leaves

1. Combine water, lentils, minced ginger, coriander, cumin, paprika, and turmeric in a medium pot. Bring to a boil over high heat, then reduce heat to medium and simmer until lentils are soft, 20 to 25 minutes.

2. Meanwhile, heat a separate pan over medium-high heat. Add 2 tablespoons butter, the chopped onion and sliced scallions. Cook until the onions are soft. Then add the carrots, pepper, cardamom, cinnamon, cloves, and bay leaves. Continue to cook until carrots are starting to soften and onions are golden brown.

3. Pour the golden-brown onion mixture into the soft lentils. Stir in the potatoes, honey, salt, and asafoetida, if using. Simmer for 5 minutes to allow flavors to combine.

4. Remove from heat, stir in the remaining one tablespoon of butter and serve. Delicious over rice or with lime and cilantro to garnish.

*Asafoetida (pronounced “ahh-suh-feh-ty-dee”), also called “hing”, is an ingredient often used in Indian cooking. It is made from the dried sap of an herb native to Iran and Afghanistan.