Misir Wot (Ethiopian spicy red lentils)

Ingredients:
Red lentils
Vegetable oil
½ red onion & ½ yellow onion
Ginger paste
Crushed garlic
Can of diced tomatoes
Berbere (Ethiopian spice mix; I found mine [here](#))
Salt
Cinnamon
Cardamom *(Preferably: Korerima - African cardamom; I found mine [here](#))*
Spiced ghee *(Preferably: Niter Kibe – Ethiopian spiced ghee; I found mine [here](#))**
* but [this](#) seasoned buffalo ghee from Trader Joe's is a decent substitute)

Instructions:
- Chop the onions very finely and put in a pot on medium heat and stir until they start to simmer a bit.

- Add ¼ cup or so vegetable oil in with onions (or whatever amount slightly coats the onions), and 1 tsp of cinnamon. Keep stirring.

- After the onions have been simmering for a few minutes, add 1 tbsp. minced garlic, 1 tbsp. of ginger paste, 1 or 2 tbsp. berbere, and ½ cup crushed tomato. Stir until creamy. (*I use a tube of [ginger paste](#) and a small jar of [minced garlic](#) from Trader Joe's*)

- (Now go wash 1 cup red lentils in preparation. Just put 1 cup of lentils into a large bowl, add water, and massage the lentils. The water will become cloudy. Strain off the water and repeat until the water is no longer cloudy.)

- Add 1 cup washed red lentils and 1 cup of water. Stir, and then let simmer. Stir occasionally.

- The water will reduce down as it simmers. Do this at least 2 more times (total of 3 cups water), approximately once every 10 minutes (2nd cup of water after 10 minutes, 3rd cup after 10 more, etc.) Let simmer.

- Near the end: Add ¼ tsp. cardamom & ½ tsp. salt (or, to taste). Stir in and let simmer at least 10 more minutes. Note: Toward the end, you'll need to stir more frequently, as the stew gets less and less watery so it doesn't burn/stick to the bottom.

- Near the end, stir in 1 or 2 tbsp. of kibe (spiced ghee/clarified butter).

- Optional: You CAN let simmer much longer. I've continued the simmering process for several hours on very low heat. The flavors will deepen if you do.

- Let sit on very low heat for 5-10 minutes to cool and congeal a bit.