Claims:

1. A process for preparing a fermented white lentil beverage, the process comprising:

(a) soaking white lentils in water for at least 30 min,

(b) removing the water from step (a) and adding new water to provide a mixture of white lentils and water in a wt ratio of 1:20 to 1:1,

(c) cooking the mixture of step (b) under pressure for 10 to 40 min,

(d) forming a paste from the cooked lentil mixture and adjusting the solid content of the paste to be 7 to 20 wt% before wet milling the resulting slurry,

(e) filtering the wet milled slurry of step (d) through a 10-150 micron membrane and incubating the slurry with amylase enzyme at a temperature at which the enzyme is active to reduce the starch content of the slurry,

(f) inactivating the amylase enzyme by heating, to produce a white lentil beverage, and

(g) inoculating the white lentil beverage with a lactic acid bacterial culture and incubating until the beverage reaches a pH of 4.3 to 4.6.

2. A process according to claim 1 wherein whole white lentils are soaked for at least 30 minutes in step (a) in water of 95°C or crushed white lentils are soaked for at least 30 minutes in step (a) in water at 4 to 50°C.

3. A process according to claim 1 or claim 2 wherein the mixture of step (b) is cooked at 100 to 140°C in step (c), preferably at 110 to 130°C, more preferably at 115 to 125°C.

4. A process according to any preceding claim wherein the white lentil paste in step (d) is wet milled in a colloid mill.

5. A process according to any preceding claim wherein about 0.01 w/v% to 0.5 w/v% amylase enzyme is added in step (e), preferably 0.1 w/v%.

6. A process according to any preceding claim wherein the slurry is heated at 65°C in step (e).

7. A process according to any preceding claim wherein the wet milled slurry of step (d) is filtered through a 100 micron membrane in step (e).

8. A process according to any preceding claim wherein the starch content is reduced to less than about 5 wt% in step (e).

9. A process according to any preceding claim wherein 0.1 to 4 w/v% edible oil is added prior to or following step (f), preferably 0.1 to 3 w/v%.

10. A process according to any preceding claim wherein the white lentil beverage is incubated with a lactic acid bacterial culture selected from the group consisting of *Lactococcus lactis, Lactobacillus* species, *Streptococcus thermophilus, Bifidobacterium* species, and *Leuconostoc* species.

11. A process according to any preceding claim wherein the white lentil beverage is incubated with a commercial yogurt culture comprising selected strains of *Lactobacillus bulgaricus* and *Streptococcus thermophillus* bacteria.