

Soul-soothing chicken soup

Ingredients

For the chicken

- 1.8kg/4lb free-range chicken
- 1 lemon
- Knob of butter
- 1 tbsp olive oil
- Sea salt and freshly ground black pepper

For the soup

- 2 tbsp olive oil
- 2 onions, peeled, roughly chopped
- 2 garlic cloves, peeled, finely chopped
- 2 leeks, sliced
- 2 litres/3½ pints vegetable or chicken stock
- 2 carrots, roughly chopped
- 2 stalks celery, roughly chopped
- 3-4 bay leaves
- Small bunch flat-leaf parsley
- Large splash white wine
- To finish the soup and serve
- 1 tbsp olive oil
- 2 celery sticks, trimmed, finely chopped
- 1 large carrot, peeled, finely chopped
- 1 leek, sliced
- 2 large handfuls freshly shelled peas
- Small bunch fresh tarragon, finely chopped
- Small bunch fresh flat-leaf parsley, finely chopped
- Handful fresh parmesan, finely grated
- Small sourdough loaf, torn into pieces

Preparation method

1. Preheat the oven to 180C/350F/Gas 4.
2. For the chicken, stuff the cavity with the whole lemon and place in a roasting tin. Rub the skin with the butter and olive oil. Season, to taste, with salt and freshly ground black pepper, and roast for 1½-2 hours, or until the juices run clear when a skewer is inserted into the thickest part of the thigh. Remove from the oven and set aside in the tin.
3. For the soup, heat the oil in a large saucepan, big enough to fit the whole chicken and liquid in. Gently fry the red onion and garlic for 4-5

less than 30 mins

preparation time

**no cooking
required**

cooking time

Serves 4-6

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minutes over a medium heat.

4. Add the leeks and continue to cook for a further 2-3 minutes.
5. Remove the lemon from the chicken cavity, and place the whole cooked chicken into the pan, reserving the roasting tin and juices for later.
6. Pour in the stock, making sure that the chicken is almost completely covered.
7. Add the carrots and celery to the pan, along with the bay leaves, parsley and white wine.
8. Cook the soup for 4 hours, checking that the liquid does not evaporate too much, adding a little water if necessary.
9. When the soup is cooked, tip the sourdough bread chunks into the roasting pan, turning to coat in the juices, and place the tin back in the oven for 10-15 minutes, or until golden-brown, whilst you finish off the soup.
10. To finish the soup, heat the oil in another large pan, and gently fry the remaining celery, carrot and leek for 6-8 minutes to soften.
11. Remove the chicken from the soup pan and set aside. Strain the soup through a sieve into the pan with the softened vegetables.
12. Add the fresh peas and cook for one minute.
13. Shred the meat from the chicken.
14. To serve, ladle the soup into 4-6 bowls and top with the shredded chicken, tarragon, parsley and parmesan, with the roasted sourdough bread on the side.