



Chicken Soup With Noodles And Parmesan Croutons

8-10 cups chicken stock (or enough stock to cover chicken)

1 whole chicken, about 3 pounds

Kosher salt

4 medium carrots, peeled and sliced ½ inch thick on the bias

4 celery stalks, peeled and sliced ½ inch thick on the bias

3 medium leeks, white part only, sliced ½ inch thick on the bias, and swirled in cold water to clean

Bouquet garni: 1 bay leaf, a few parsley sprigs, a few thyme sprigs, tied together with kitchen twine

4 garlic cloves, peeled and lightly pressed

Freshly ground black pepper

¾ cup dried ditalini or other small macaroni-type pasta

3 tablespoons unsalted butter, optional

1 tablespoon freshly squeezed lemon juice, or more to taste

1 tablespoon chopped fresh tarragon

¼ cup coarsely chopped fresh parsley

Croutons:

2 tablespoons olive oil

2 garlic cloves, peeled and lightly smashed

2 slices homemade-type white bread, cut into 1/2-inch cubes

1-2 tablespoons freshly grated Parmesan cheese

Place the chicken breast side down in a large deep soup pot. Add the stock and 1 tablespoon kosher salt (if stock is unsalted.) Bring to a boil and skim the surface. Lower the heat to simmer and add the carrots, celery, leeks, bouquet garni, and garlic and season with pepper. Simmer the chicken for 15 minutes, turn it over and continue to simmer until cooked through, about 25 minutes more.

In the meantime, put a medium pot of salted water on to boil for the pasta. When it comes to a rapid boil, add the pasta. Cook until al dente. Drain and set aside. To prepare croutons, in a skillet sauté garlic in olive oil over moderately high heat until golden and discard with a slotted spoon. In garlic-flavored oil fry the bread, seasoned with salt, over moderate heat, stirring occasionally, until golden on all sides. Remove skillet from heat and add Parmesan, tossing croutons to coat well.

Lift the chicken out of the pot, and allow to cool. Taste the vegetables and if they are not tender, continue to simmer. When vegetables are done, turn off the heat. Remove the bouquet garni and garlic. When chicken is cool enough to handle, pull the meat off the bones and shred into medium pieces. Whisk the butter into the soup, and add lemon juice and seasonings as desired. Add the chopped tarragon and parsley, pasta, and shredded chicken.

Serve soup sprinkled with croutons.



Chicken Stock

5 lbs. chicken carcasses/bones

Cold water

1 large onion, peeled and coarsely chopped

1 medium carrot, peeled and sliced

2 large stalks of celery, washed and roughly chopped

Bouquet Garni (parsley stems, sprigs of thyme, bay leaf)

Rinse the chicken carcasses under cold water and remove excessive fat. Place in stockpot, shake to settle the bones, and barely cover with cold water.

Bring to a simmer. Skim the scum.

Add remainder of the ingredients and continue to cook at a bare simmer for no more than 3 hours. Skim the scum occasionally.

Strain, cool down in an ice bath, and either refrigerate or freeze.

Note: When completed stock is cooled down, all fat will rise to the surface and can then easily be removed.