

Grandma's Chicken Soup Recipe

There are few dishes in the world as universally comforting as a steaming bowl of homemade chicken soup. **Grandma's Chicken Soup** is not just a meal; it is a remedy for the soul, a cure for the common cold, and a warm hug on a rainy day. This recipe focuses on creating a crystal-clear, golden broth that is packed with flavor, avoiding the muddiness that often plagues quick versions. Loaded with tender chunks of chicken, soft egg noodles, and perfectly cooked root vegetables, this soup strikes the delicate balance between lightness and hearty satisfaction. It is the kind of recipe that has been passed down for generations because it simply works.

Why You'll Love This Recipe

Healing Comfort

This soup is the definition of restorative food. The slow-simmered broth is rich in nutrients and collagen, which can help soothe a sore throat and boost your immune system. Unlike canned soups that are laden with sodium and artificial preservatives, this homemade version tastes fresh and clean. The aroma of simmering thyme, onions, and celery fills the entire house, creating an atmosphere of warmth and care that makes everyone feel better instantly.

Clear Broth Perfection

The hallmark of a true grandma-style soup is the clarity of the broth. By following a few simple techniques—like skimming the foam and not boiling the soup too vigorously—you achieve a beautiful, translucent golden liquid. This visual appeal matches the refined taste. The vegetables are cooked until tender but not mushy, maintaining their vibrant colors and distinct textures. It is a simple dish executed with care, resulting in a sophisticated yet rustic bowl.

Ingredient Highlights & Substitutions

Essential Ingredients

The foundation of this soup is the "Mirepoix"—a classic French combination of onions, carrots, and celery that provides the aromatic base. Wide egg noodles are the traditional choice for their soft texture and ability to soak up the broth without disintegrating. Fresh thyme and bay leaves infuse the liquid with subtle earthy notes that dried herbs struggle to replicate. Using bone-in chicken thighs or a whole chicken is preferable to breasts, as the bones release gelatin that gives the broth a luxurious mouthfeel.

Smart Substitutions

If you are short on time, a high-quality store-bought rotisserie chicken can save you hours; simply simmer the carcass in boxed broth to fortify the flavor before adding the meat. For a gluten-free version, swap the egg noodles for rice or gluten-free fusilli; just be sure to cook the starch separately so it does not cloud the soup. Leeks can be used in place of onions for a milder, sweeter flavor profile. If fresh herbs are unavailable, use one-third the amount of dried herbs, but

crush them in your palm first to release their oils.

Step-by-Step Instructions

Prep Phase

Begin by washing and chopping your vegetables. Dice the onions, slice the celery into half-moons, and cut the carrots into rounds of uniform thickness so they cook evenly. If you are using raw chicken, pat it dry and season it generously with salt and pepper. In a large Dutch oven or stockpot, heat a tablespoon of butter or oil over medium heat. This initial fat will help release the flavors of the vegetables and sear the chicken.

Cooking Phase

Sauté the onion, celery, and carrots for about 7-10 minutes until they soften but do not brown. Add minced garlic and cook for just one minute. Pour in your chicken stock and add the raw chicken pieces, thyme, and bay leaves. Bring the pot to a gentle simmer—do not let it boil violently. Skim off any foam that rises to the top. Simmer for 20-25 minutes until the chicken is fully cooked. Remove the chicken, shred it with two forks, and return it to the pot. Finally, bring the soup to a rolling boil and add the egg noodles, cooking them for 6-8 minutes until tender.

Pro Tips for Perfect Results

Technique Secrets

To prevent your noodles from becoming mushy and absorbing all the broth, consider cooking them in a separate pot of salted water and adding them to individual bowls just before serving. This is especially important if you plan to have leftovers, as noodles sitting in broth overnight will turn into a starchy paste. Additionally, seasoning is key. Chicken soup requires a surprising amount of salt to bring out the flavors; taste it at the very end and adjust accordingly. A squeeze of fresh lemon juice right before serving adds a brightness that cuts through the richness.

Common Mistakes to Avoid

One common mistake is overcooking the vegetables. They should be “fork-tender,” offering a slight resistance, rather than dissolving in your mouth. Another error is boiling the chicken too hard, which can make the meat tough and rubbery. A gentle simmer ensures the chicken remains tender and juicy. Lastly, do not forget to remove the bay leaves and herb sprigs before serving; biting into a whole bay leaf is an unpleasant surprise that disrupts the comfort of the meal.

Serving Ideas & Pairings

Presentation & Plating

Ladle the steaming soup into deep, wide bowls to allow the broth to cool slightly while keeping the center hot. Garnish generously with freshly chopped parsley or dill for a burst of color and freshness. Serve the soup with a side of crusty artisan bread or saltine crackers for dipping. A simple grinding of coarse black pepper on top adds a final layer of heat and aesthetic appeal.

Pairing Suggestions

This soup is a complete meal on its own, but it pairs wonderfully with a grilled cheese sandwich for the ultimate comfort food duo. For a lighter option, a simple green salad with a vinaigrette dressing provides a crisp contrast to the savory, warm soup. If you are feeling adventurous, serve it alongside a savory biscuit or a slice of cornbread.

For a different take on chicken and pasta that is baked to perfection, try our [Chicken Noodle Casserole Recipe](#).

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Grandma's Chicken Soup



Aaron recipes

A classic, soul-warming chicken noodle soup with a crystal-clear golden broth, tender veggies, and egg noodles.

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Prep Time 15 minutes mins

Cook Time 45 minutes mins

Total Time 1 hour hr

Course Dinner, Soup

Cuisine American

Servings 6 servings

Calories 320 kcal

Equipment

- Large Stockpot
- Cutting Board
- Ladle

Ingredients

- 2 tbsp butter
- 1 large onion, chopped
- 2 large carrots, sliced
- 2 stalks celery, sliced

- 2 cloves garlic, minced
- 8 cups chicken broth
- 1.5 lbs chicken thighs (bone-in, skinless)
- 4 sprigs fresh thyme
- 2 leaves bay leaves
- 6 oz wide egg noodles
- 2 tbsp fresh parsley, chopped

Instructions

1. Melt butter in a large pot over medium heat. Add onion, carrots, and celery. Sauté for 7 minutes.
2. Add garlic and cook for 1 minute. Pour in chicken broth, add chicken thighs, thyme, and bay leaves.
3. Bring to a simmer (do not boil hard). Cook for 25 minutes until chicken is tender. Skim foam.
4. Remove chicken, shred meat, and discard bones. Return meat to pot.
5. Bring to a boil, add noodles, and cook for 6-8 minutes. Stir in parsley and serve.

Notes

For the clearest broth, simmer gently and do not let the pot come to a violent boil. Cook noodles separately if storing leftovers.

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Cooking Times for Soup Add-ins

Ingredient	Cook Time in Simmering Broth	Notes
Egg Noodles	6-8 Minutes	Add last; cook until al dente.
Diced Carrots	15-20 Minutes	Add with broth; needs time to soften.
White Rice	15-20 Minutes	Rinse starch off before adding.
Cubed Potatoes	10-15 Minutes	Add halfway through cooking.

Frequently Asked Questions

Can I make this in a slow cooker?

Yes! Add all ingredients except the noodles to the slow cooker. Cook on low for 6-8 hours or high for 3-4 hours. Remove the chicken to shred it, return it to the pot, and add the noodles during the last 20 minutes of cooking on high.

How do I store leftovers?

Store the soup in an airtight container in the refrigerator for up to 3 days. As mentioned, if possible, store the noodles separately from the broth to prevent them from getting soggy. To freeze, freeze the soup without the noodles, then add fresh noodles when reheating.

Why is my broth cloudy?

Cloudy broth is usually caused by boiling the soup too vigorously, which emulsifies the fat and disintegrates the vegetables/meat proteins. Keeping the heat low (a gentle simmer) and skimming the foam off the top will result in a clearer broth.

Conclusion

Grandma's Chicken Soup is more than just a recipe; it is a tradition that brings warmth and wellness to your home. With its clear, golden broth, tender chicken, and comforting noodles, it checks every box for a satisfying meal. By taking the time to sauté the vegetables and simmer the soup gently, you elevate humble ingredients into something truly special. Keep this recipe close for cold winter nights or whenever you need a bowl of pure comfort.

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