

Grandma's Chicken Soup Recipe

There are few things in life as restorative as a bowl of homemade soup, specifically Grandma's chicken soup. It is the culinary equivalent of a warm hug, known for curing colds, mending hearts, and warming bones on chilly winter evenings. This isn't just a quick broth from a carton; it is a slow-simmered labor of love that extracts every ounce of flavor from fresh ingredients. The golden broth, rich with collagen and savory goodness, is filled with tender chunks of chicken, sweet carrots, celery, and soft noodles. It is a timeless recipe that prioritizes wholesomeness and deep flavor, bringing the rustic charm of Grandma's kitchen right to your table.

Why You'll Love This Recipe

Perfect for Flu Season

When you are feeling under the weather, this soup acts as natural medicine. The warm broth helps clear congestion, while the protein and vegetables provide the essential nutrients your body craves for recovery. Unlike processed canned soups which are often loaded with sodium and preservatives, this homemade version is clean, nourishing, and gentle on the stomach. It hydrates and soothes, making it the ultimate sick-day meal that actually tastes delicious while it works its healing magic.

Whole Chicken Highlights

The key to the superior flavor in this recipe is using a whole chicken or bone-in chicken pieces rather than just boneless breasts. The bones, skin, and cartilage release gelatin and minerals into the water as they simmer, creating a broth with body and a silky mouthfeel. This depth of flavor is impossible to achieve with bouillon cubes alone. The meat remains incredibly juicy and tender because it cooks gently in the liquid, ensuring that every spoonful is packed with succulent chicken that falls apart effortlessly.

05 Homemade Chicken Noodle Soup Img 3

Grandma's Homemade Chicken Soup



Aaron recipes

The ultimate comfort food: Grandma's Chicken Soup recipe features tender chicken, fresh veggies, and egg noodles in a rich, slow-simmered golden broth.

[Print Recipe](#) [Pin Recipe](#)

Prep Time 20 minutes mins

Cook Time 1 minute min

Total Time 1 minute min

Course Dinner, Soup
Cuisine American

Servings 6 bowls
Calories 320 kcal

Equipment

- Large Stockpot
- Ladle
- Cutting Board

Ingredients

- 1 whole Chicken (3-4 lbs) or 3 lbs bone-in parts
- 4 medium Carrots, sliced
- 4 stalks Celery, sliced
- 1 large Yellow onion, chopped
- 3 cloves Garlic, smashed
- 2 sprigs Fresh thyme
- 1 leaf Bay leaf
- 8 oz Egg noodles
- 1 tbsp Salt (adjust to taste)
- 1 tsp Black pepper

Instructions

1. Place chicken, chopped onions, half the carrots and celery, garlic, herbs, and peppercorns in a large stockpot. Cover with water by 1 inch.
2. Bring to a boil over medium-high heat, then immediately reduce to a low simmer. Skim foam from the top.
3. Cover partially and simmer for 90 minutes until chicken is tender. Remove chicken to a plate to cool.
4. Strain the broth through a fine-mesh sieve into a clean pot. Discard cooked vegetables. (Alternatively, leave veggies in for rustic style).
5. Shred the cooled chicken meat, discarding bones and skin. Return meat to the broth along with remaining fresh carrots and celery.
6. Simmer for 15 minutes until veggies are soft. Add egg noodles and cook for another 7-9 minutes until tender.
7. Season with salt, pepper, and fresh parsley before serving.

Notes

For the clearest broth, simmer gently and never let it come to a rolling boil. Cook noodles separately for leftovers.

Keyword comfort food, grandmas chicken soup, homemade chicken soup

Ingredient Highlights & Substitutions

Essential Ingredients

To replicate Grandma's magic, you need a whole chicken (roughly 3-4 pounds), fresh vegetables, and aromatics. Carrots, celery, and yellow onions form the classic mirepoix base that sweetens the broth. Fresh herbs like parsley, thyme, and a bay leaf are non-negotiable for that traditional savory profile. Egg noodles are the classic carbohydrate choice, offering a soft, chewy texture that soaks up the broth. Finally, plenty of water and patience are the unseen ingredients that bring it all together.

Smart Substitutions

If breaking down a whole chicken is intimidating, you can use bone-in, skin-on chicken thighs and legs, which offer similar flavor benefits. For a gluten-free version, swap the egg noodles for rice, quinoa, or gluten-free pasta; just remember to cook the pasta separately to avoid clouding the soup. If you want to boost the nutritional content, feel free to add spinach, kale, or chopped parsnips during the last few minutes of cooking. A squeeze of fresh lemon juice at the end can also brighten the flavors if the soup tastes too heavy.

Step-by-Step Instructions

Prep Phase

Begin by washing your vegetables thoroughly. Chop the onions, carrots, and celery into uniform chunks—not too small, or they will turn to mush during the long simmer. If using a whole chicken, remove the giblets. Place the chicken in a large stockpot. Add the chopped vegetables, whole garlic cloves, bay leaves, peppercorns, and fresh thyme sprigs. Cover everything with cold water by about an inch. Starting with cold water allows the proteins and fats to release slowly, resulting in a clearer broth.

Cooking Phase

Bring the pot to a boil over medium-high heat. As soon as it boils, immediately reduce the heat to a low simmer. Skim off any gray foam that rises to the surface with a spoon; this ensures a clean taste and appearance. Cover the pot with the lid slightly ajar and let it simmer gently for about 90 minutes, or until the chicken is falling off the bone. Remove the chicken carefully to a cutting board. Strain the broth if you prefer a refined look, or simply fish out the bones and aromatics. Shred the meat, discarding the skin and bones, and return the meat to the pot. Bring back to a simmer, add the noodles, and cook until tender.

Pro Tips for Perfect Results

Technique Secrets

The difference between a good soup and a great soup is salt management. Do not salt the water heavily at the beginning, as the liquid will reduce and concentrate, potentially making the final dish too salty. Season moderately at the start, and then adjust the seasoning right at the end. Another secret is to cook the noodles separately if you plan on having leftovers. Noodles left in broth overnight will act like sponges, absorbing all the liquid and becoming bloated and mushy.

Common Mistakes to Avoid

A major mistake is boiling the soup rapidly instead of simmering. rigorous boiling emulsifies the fat into the liquid, making the broth cloudy and greasy rather than clear and golden. Keep the heat low and steady. Also, avoid adding delicate herbs like parsley too early. Add fresh parsley right before serving to maintain its bright green color and fresh, grassy flavor, which can be lost with prolonged heat.

Serving Ideas & Pairings

Presentation & Plating

Ladle the steaming soup into deep ceramic bowls. Ensure everyone gets a fair distribution of meat, vegetables, and noodles. A sprinkle of fresh cracked black pepper and chopped parsley on top adds visual appeal. Serve with a side of saltine crackers or a slice of buttered crusty bread for dipping. The contrast of the crunchy bread with the soft soup components is texture perfection.

Pairing Suggestions

Since this soup is a complete meal in itself, sides should be simple. A grilled cheese sandwich is the classic partner, offering a cheesy, crispy counterpoint to the brothy soup. Alternatively, a simple garden salad with a vinaigrette dressing provides a crisp, cool element that balances the hot, savory soup. For a comforting beverage, hot tea with honey and lemon complements the soothing nature of the meal.

For a heartier baked version of these flavors, check out our [Chicken Noodle Casserole](#) which transforms these ingredients into a bubbly oven-baked dish.

Nutrition Facts

Nutrient	Amount	% Daily Value
Calories	320 kcal	16%
Protein	28 g	56%
Carbohydrates	22 g	7%
Fat	12 g	18%
Saturated Fat	3 g	15%
Cholesterol	85 mg	28%
Sodium	890 mg	37%

Frequently Asked Questions

Can I use a rotisserie chicken? Yes, using a rotisserie chicken is a great time-saver. Simply strip the meat and set it aside. Simmer the carcass (bones and skin) with vegetables and water for 45 minutes to make a quick stock. Strain, then add fresh carrots, celery, and noodles, simmering until soft. Add the cooked meat back in at the very end just to heat through.

How long does this keep in the fridge? Chicken soup keeps well in the refrigerator for 3 to 4 days. In fact, the flavors often improve the next day as the ingredients meld. Ensure it is stored in an airtight container.

Can I freeze chicken soup? Yes, the broth and chicken freeze beautifully. However, noodles and potatoes do not freeze well; they become mushy upon thawing. It is best to freeze the soup base without the noodles, then add fresh noodles when you reheat the soup.

Conclusion

Grandma's chicken soup is more than just a recipe; it is a tradition of care and nourishment. By taking the time to simmer whole ingredients, you create a depth of flavor that instant soups simply cannot match. It requires simple techniques and humble ingredients, yet yields a result that is rich, flavorful, and deeply satisfying. Whether you are nursing a cold or simply seeking comfort on a rainy day, this soup promises to warm you from the inside out.