

A Sutherland Belle

Lemon Chicken Orzo Soup

INGREDIENTS

- 1 tablespoon olive oil
- 1 tablespoons butter
- ½ large yellow onion, diced
- 2 carrots, peeled and diced
- 3 stalks of celery, diced
- 4 cloves garlic, minced
- 1 teaspoon EACH: coarse salt, fresh cracked pepper, thyme, onion powder, and garlic powder
- 6 cups chicken broth
- 3 large boneless chicken breasts, seasoned with salt and pepper (or 1 whole rotisserie chicken, cubed)
- 1/2 teaspoon red pepper flakes
- 1 (0.5-ounce) packet of fresh poultry blend herbs
- 2 stems of fresh rosemary
- 2 bay leaves
- 1 cup of uncooked orzo pasta
- 1 large lemon, juiced
- fresh parsley for garnish

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Season chicken breasts with salt and pepper. Heat olive oil in a large stockpot or Dutch oven over medium heat. Add chicken to the stockpot and cook until golden, about 2-3 minutes; set aside.
2. Add butter to the pot. Sauté the celery, carrots, and onions over medium-high heat for 5-7 minutes.
3. Stir in the garlic, salt, pepper, thyme, red pepper flakes, and onion and garlic powders. Cook for about 30 seconds.
4. Pour in chicken broth and add the reserved chicken (if using rotisserie chicken, add after the soup has simmered for 20 minutes). Tie the poultry blend and fresh rosemary together with cooking twine. Add to the soup along with the bay leaves, and bring to a boil.
5. Cover the soup (lid slightly ajar), reduce the heat, and simmer for 20 minutes. Remove the chicken, shred it, and add it back to the pot. If using rotisserie chicken, add it now.
6. While the broth simmers, cook the orzo according to package directions. Drain and set aside.
7. Remove fresh herbs from the broth and add the lemon juice. Add cooked orzo (or if expecting leftovers, add the desired amount of orzo to each bowl) and serve immediately. Top with fresh parsley.

TIP: Orzo tends to continue to expand in the broth. If you plan on leftovers, you may want to make and store the orzo separately.