



My Italian Wedding Soup

Serves 6

Ingredients

- 1 lb ground chicken (or extra lean ground beef)
- 1 large egg
- ¼ cup bread crumbs (I often add more if the mixture seems too loose)
- 2 Tbsp. grated fresh Parmesan cheese (optional)
- 1 tsp. dry basil
- 2 Tbsp finely diced shallot or 4 cloves peeled minced garlic
- ½ tsp sea salt
- ½ tsp pepper
- 8 cups chicken stock (homemade, boxed broth or Better Than Bouillon is fine, but do not over salt)
- 1 cup uncooked orzo pasta
- 5 large thinly sliced carrots
- 1 peeled sliced parsnip
- 1 cup fresh green beans, trimmed and cut into 1 inch pieces-frozen peas would be good too
- 1 cup peeled and cubed butternut squash, about a cup (optional)
- 3 cups thinly sliced fresh baby spinach (stems removed before slicing)

Instructions

In a medium bowl, combine ground chicken, egg, breadcrumbs, basil, Parmesan and shallot or garlic. Form into ¾ inch meatballs and place on a tray.

Boil chicken broth, add all the vegetables except spinach, then put in meatballs and gently stir. Return to the heat until it boils, reduce to medium heat, cover and cook on medium low for 10 minutes or until orzo is done. Stir to keep from sticking. When the time is up, turn off the heat and add the spinach which will wilt nicely.

Serve with rustic crusty bread!

Note: the orzo will continue to expand and thicken the soup a lot, so if you reheat it you might need to add additional broth or even water. Taste for seasoning.