

Vietnamese-Inspired Rice & Chicken Soup

Makes about 2 to 2 ½ quarts/ 8 to 10 cups/ 4 generous main dish servings

*Note: This is a very fast recipe if you already have cooked rice on hand**. However, this soup should be made at the last minute, since the rice will continue to swell and absorb broth for as long as it sits. For the same reason, left overs (while edible) are not recommended.*



Ingredients:

- 2 shallots, finely minced (or ½ medium red onion)
- 1 Tablespoon fish sauce
- 2 small breasts of chicken *
- ½ teaspoon (freshly ground) pepper
- 1 cup (+/-) cooked long-grain rice **
- 8 cups good-quality chicken broth, preferably home-made
- 4 Tablespoons coarsely chopped dry-roasted (unsalted) peanuts
- 3 large garlic cloves, degermed
- 1 knob of ginger, peeled
- 2 Tablespoons oil
- 2 celery stalks, thinly sliced
- 2 carrots, quartered lengthwise
- 1 handful of parsley leaves (cilantro would be better, but I don't always have that growing in the garden...)
- 1 or 2 hot chilies (serrano or cayenne), finely minced (or a teaspoon or two of Vietnamese-style chunky hot sauce)
- Vietnamese dipping sauce

** budget saving tip: Buy a whole chicken and cut it up. Remove breasts for this dish (use only one if large). The rest (legs, thighs and wings) can be grilled or baked or used up in another recipe. The carcass, the wing tips, the heart, gizzard, and the neck can be used to make stock.*

Instructions:

1. Cut the chicken in thin small bite-size slivers.
2. Mince shallots. Combine in a small bowl, with fish sauce & the chicken; dust with pepper. Refrigerate if you are doing this in advance
3. Heat up the broth and rice. **
4. Mash (or blend) the garlic with the ginger to form a paste.
5. Slightly toast the peanut in a dry skillet or in the oven. Set aside.
6. Heat a heavy-bottomed skillet or wok and add oil. Add the celery and sauté for 2 or 3 minutes. Add chicken & marinade and continue to sauté on high heat, stirring until chicken is cooked through about 5 to 7 minutes. Add the garlic/ginger paste and stir-fry quickly until fragrant about 20 seconds. Add the content of the skillet to the pot of broth. Deglaze the pan with water and add to the soup, making sure to scrape the skillet well. Repeat if necessary so as to get as much of the flavors left from sautéing the chicken & vegetables as possible. Add the parsley leaves.
7. Ladle into bowls, add a few peanuts to each bowl and 1 Tablespoon of dipping sauce.
8. Serve with additional peanuts, chilies & the Vietnamese dipping sauce on the side, so each person can flavor their bowl as desired.

*** Note: if you do not have cooked rice, cook ½ cup rice in the broth: bring to boil, and simmer for 15 to 20 minutes until rice is tender.*

Vietnamese Dipping Sauce

½ cup, 4 servings

Ingredients:

- 1 clove garlic, degermed
- 1 tablespoon sugar
- 3 Tablespoons fish sauce
- 3 Tablespoons water
- 2 to 3 Tablespoons fresh lime juice
- 1 cayenne pepper, seeded if desired and minced (or 1 Teaspoon Vietnamese style hot sauce)

Instructions: In a mortar, mash the garlic and sugar with the pestle to form a paste. (Alternatively, mince the garlic as finely as possible, and add to a small sturdy bowl, add the sugar and try to mash with the back of a spoon). Add all other ingredients and stir until the sugar dissolves

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<http://www.laughingduckgardens.com/ldb主blog.php/2009/01/19/chicken-soup-with-a-twist/>*