RECIPE

Greek Lemon Chicken and Brown Rice Soup

A Greek egg-and-lemon soup for dinner: chicken breast and chewy brown rice in low-sodium broth, silky from lemon and eggs warmed to 160 °F, with dill at the end.

MAKES

6 servings US Metric

TOTAL

1 h

Ingredients

- [ ] 1 tbsp olive oil
- [ ] 1 cup chopped onion
- [ ] 2 medium celery stalks, sliced
- [ ] 2 medium carrots, diced small
- [ ] 8 cups low-sodium chicken broth
- [ ] 2 bay leaves (removed before serving)
- [ ] 1 tsp salt
- [ ] ½ tsp black pepper
- [ ] ¾ cup long-grain brown rice, dry
- [ ] 1 lb boneless skinless chicken breast
- [ ] 3 large eggs
- [ ] ½ cup fresh lemon juice, from about 2½ lemons
- [ ] ½ cup fresh dill sprigs, chopped

Method

1. Warm the olive oil in a large pot over medium heat. Cook the onion, celery and carrots 5 minutes, stirring, until the onion looks soft and clear.

2. Pour in the broth and add the bay leaves, salt and pepper. Bring it to a full boil, then stir in the brown rice, turn the heat to medium-low, cover and simmer 25 minutes.

3. Lay the whole chicken breasts in the pot, cover and simmer 15 minutes more. Lift one out and cut into the thickest part: it is done when no pink is left and a thermometer reads 165 °F. Lift all the chicken to a board and let it cool a few minutes, then shred it with two forks. The rice should be tender but chewy; if it is not, simmer a few minutes more.

4. Return the shredded chicken to the pot and take out the bay leaves. Keep the soup at a gentle simmer, with a few small bubbles at the edge.

5. Make the lemon-egg liaison in a large heatproof bowl: whisk the 3 eggs until frothy, then whisk in the ½ cup lemon juice. Ladle in ½ cup of hot broth, whisking the whole time. Repeat three more times, 2 cups of broth in all. The warmed eggs will not scramble when they meet the pot.

6. Turn the heat under the pot to low. Pour the liaison in slowly, stirring. Keep stirring over low heat until a thermometer in the broth reads 160 °F (HHS/USDA/FDA/CDC: egg dishes go to 160 °F), about 3 to 5 minutes. Do not let it boil; a boil can make the egg curdle in threads (our kitchen practice: no held claim on this). The soup turns pale gold and a little thicker.

7. Take the pot off the heat and stir in the dill. Serve at once in warm bowls.

8. Cool leftovers no more than 2 hours, or 1 hour if it is above 90 °F out, then refrigerate. Reheat gently to 165 °F, stirring, without a boil.