Orzo Chicken Noodle Soup

A comforting chicken soup with tender chicken thighs, vegetables and small rice-shaped orzo pasta.

PREP 20 MIN | COOK 40 MIN | TOTAL 60 MIN | SERVES 4 | EASY



Ingredients

- 680 g boneless skinless chicken thighs, cut into 3 cm pieces
- 1 tbsp (15 ml) olive oil
- 1 onion (150 g), diced
- 3 garlic cloves, minced
- 2 carrots (160 g), sliced
- 2 celery stalks (100 g), sliced
- 2 litres unsalted chicken broth
- 150 g dried orzo
- 1/2 tsp dried thyme
- 1/4 tsp black pepper
- 1/2 tsp salt, adjusted to taste

Ingredient note: Use unsalted broth where listed. Keep chicken chilled until needed. Adjust chili to taste.

Method

1. Heat oil in a large pot. Soften onion, carrots and celery for 6 minutes; stir in garlic for 30 seconds.

2. Add chicken, broth and seasonings. Bring to a gentle simmer. Cover partially and cook 20–25 minutes until chicken reaches 165°F (74°C).

3. Lift chicken onto a clean board. Shred the chicken with two forks.

4. Return chicken to broth. Add orzo and simmer for the packet cooking time, usually 6–10 minutes.

Serving

Serve hot in bowls with lemon wedges.

Doneness & safety

Chicken must reach 165°F (74°C) in its thickest part; use a food thermometer.

Helpful tips

- Prepare ingredients before heating the pan.
- Use gentle heat for dairy.
- Check the thickest chicken pieces with a thermometer.

Avoid: Do not judge safety by color alone.

Avoid: Keep cooked chicken off plates used for raw poultry.

Variations

- Herbs: Finish with chopped parsley or cilantro.
- Vegetables: Add 150 g peas during the final 5 minutes.
- Mild version: Omit chili and use sweet paprika.

Storage, freezing & reheating

Refrigerate in shallow covered containers within 2 hours, or 1 hour above 90°F (32°C). Keep at 40°F (4°C) or below and use within 3-4 days. Freeze airtight portions for up to 2 months for best quality. Thaw in the refrigerator. Reheat leftovers to 165°F (74°C), adding a splash of water to prevent drying. Stir sauced dishes frequently over gentle heat.

Quick answers

Can I make this ahead? Store the soup and cooked noodles separately to preserve texture.

Can I freeze it? Freeze the broth and solids without noodles, then add fresh noodles when serving.