



# Hearty Chicken & Pearl Barley Winter Soup

As the days grow colder, your body craves warmth and nutrition that truly sustains you. This hearty Chicken & Pearl Barley Soup is thoughtfully crafted with lean protein, fibre-rich barley, and a rainbow of winter vegetables – simmered slowly into a comforting bowl that is as nutritious as it is delicious. Simple to prepare and packed with clean, whole-food ingredients, it's the perfect way to nourish yourself and your loved ones through Winter. Packed with protein & fibre goodness for the whole family.

## Ingredients:

### Soup base:

- 1.5 litres low-sodium chicken or vegetable stock
- 400g boneless, skinless chicken breast, cut into 2cm cubes
- 200g pearl barley, rinsed
- 2 Tbsp olive oil (or BWell Canola oil)

### Seasoning and herbs:

- 2 fresh bay leaves
- 4 sprigs fresh thyme (or 1 tsp dried)
- 1 tsp crushed black peppercorns
- 3 parsley stems (leaves reserved for garnish)

### Vegetables:

- 1 large brown onion, finely diced
- 2 medium carrots, peeled and cut into 1cm cubes
- 2 celery stalks, sliced
- 300g butternut, peeled and cut into 2cm cubes
- 200g baby marrows (courgettes), diced
- 1 cup chopped spinach or Swiss chard
- 1 cup frozen peas

### Finishing touches:

- Fresh parsley, chopped
- Lemon wedges (optional)
- Crusty toasted wholewheat bread, for serving

Recipe continued on Page 2...

### Good to know!

**Spinach** – Rich in antioxidants and folate, supporting cell health and potentially lowering certain cancer risks.

**Carrots** – High in beta-carotene, which may help protect cells from cancer-causing damage.

**Peas** – Provide fibre and plant compounds linked to improved digestion and reduced colorectal cancer risk.

**Butternut** – Rich in vitamin A and antioxidants that support immunity and may help reduce cancer-causing cell damage.







## Instructions:

### 1. Sauté Base Vegetables:

Heat oil in a large pot. Add onion, carrot, and celery. Cook gently for 8-10 minutes until soft but not browned.

### 2. Cook Barley & Butternut:

Stir in rinsed barley and cubed butternut. Pour in stock and add seasoning bundle (bay leaves, thyme, peppercorns, parsley stems). Cover and simmer for 25 minutes.

### 3. Add Chicken & Tender Veg:

Add cubed chicken and diced baby marrows. Simmer uncovered for 15-20 minutes until chicken is cooked. Stir in peas and spinach in the last 3 minutes.

### 4. Season & Serve:

Remove the herb leaves and stems. Adjust seasoning if needed. Garnish with fresh parsley and serve with lemon wedges and bread.

**Tip:** Add a crusty wholewheat roll with some avocado, to round off a culinary delight. Freezes well.

**As you enjoy this nourishing bowl, may it remind you that hope is a powerful ingredient—nourishing the body, warming the spirit, and carried forward by everyday heroes. This recipe is shared in support of CANSA's Heroes of Hope campaign, celebrating the strength, care, and resilience found in our communities.**



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