

Vasili's Chicken AVGOLEMONO SOUP

SERVES 4-6 DF, GF

My son Vasili loves a comforting bowl of creamy Greek chicken soup with avgolemono, a lemon-egg sauce, particularly during the cold and flu season. This classic soup has a neutral stock, meaning it is only seasoned with the best-quality sea salt flakes for a pure chicken flavour. Once I attempted to sneak in celery and a few bay leaves but Vasili would not have it; he made it very clear he did not want me messing with Yiayia's village recipe!

1 x 1.5 kg chicken
sea salt flakes and freshly ground black pepper
200 g (1 cup) medium-grain rice
2 eggs, at room temperature (see Tips)
juice of 2 lemons, plus extra if needed



Place the chicken in a medium saucepan and pour in 2 litres of cold water. Add a very generous pinch of salt and bring to a simmer. Cover and simmer gently over low heat for 1 hour.

Once cooked, remove the chicken from the pan and set aside to cool slightly. When the chicken is cool enough to handle, remove and discard the skin, and shred the meat.

Strain the stock into a smaller saucepan. Add the rice to the strained stock. Bring to the boil, then reduce the heat and simmer for 12 minutes or until the rice is al dente. Remove from the heat (it will keep cooking in the residual heat so you don't want it too soft).

Whisk the eggs in a bowl, then pour in the lemon juice and whisk to combine. Very slowly whisk in 250 ml (1 cup) of the warm chicken stock until the mixture is creamy, then pour it back into the stock and gently stir to combine. Taste and adjust the seasoning with more salt or lemon juice if needed.

Divide most of the shredded chicken among bowls and pour over the hot soup. Finish with a grinding of pepper and the remaining shredded chicken.

TIPS

- It's important that the eggs are at room temperature, otherwise they will curdle when whisked with the chicken stock.
- Add the lemon juice just before whisking in the warm stock so the acid does not cook the eggs while they are sitting.

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