Vegetable Barley Soup

History

Barley soup through the ages

Ingredients

To Brown the Vegetables

- 2 Tbs olive oil or mild flavored cooking oil

Mire poix / aromatics

- 2 large yellow onions coarsely, diced
- 2 large carrots, diced
- 2 or 3 celery ribs, diced
- 2 large garlic cloves, diced

Liquids, Flavoring & Muchrooms

- 1 large can or jar of diced tomatoes
- 1 Tbs miso_paste
- 2 Tbs tamari_sauce
- 2 medium dried bay leaves
- 6 cups vegetable broth
- 5 cups mushrooms coarsely chopped, for example, cremini, or portabella, OR a package of frozen wild mushrooms
- 1 small can of cooked, drained beans such as cannellini
- 1 cup pearl_barley

'Soft Vegetables'

- 3 or 4 blocks of frozen spinach, one per serving or chopped zucchini
- salt and pepper

Equipment

- Instant Pot or (electric) pressure cooker or Dutch oven
- Measuring spoons and cups: for measuring ingredients –> huh? who measures?

- Cutting board: for chopping
- Chef's knife: for chopping ingredients
- Stirring utensil: like a wooden spoon
- Ladle for serving
- Bowls and spoons

Instructions

1. Establish a mise_en_place make sure that all of your ingredients are prepared and you thoroughly read the recipe
2. Heat the oil and brown the aromatics in batches. Don't add more veggies until they are brown. This starts building flavor.
3. Add the rest of the aromatics and garlic. Cook for about 10 minutes
4. Add the tomatoes, bay leaves, vegetable broth, canned beans and barley and stir to combine.
5. Depending on your cooking method, you'll want to cover and simmer on the stove top for 30 minutes, or
6. Pressure cook in the Instant Pot for 10 minutes. Let steam release naturally for 15 minutes
7. Add 'soft vegetables' such as spinach or pre-cooked vegetables
8. Taste and season with salt and pepper to your liking.

Serving Suggestions

- A garnish of fresh parsley
- Crusty baguette
- Hearty red wine such as Cote du Rhone or California Cabernet Sauvignon

Notes, Tips, Variations

Variation

- Pearl Barley is classic but other grains can be used such as farro or wheat berries, or even pasta
- “Broth” - substitute for “Broth,” use bouillon cubes and water. Add wine, red wine will compliment. Adjust volume and broth flavor for taste. If you are not a vegetarian, beef broth or bouillon is a classic flavor enhancer.
- An immersion blender can be used to quickly mix and puree the soup creating a thicker broth.
- Other vegetables can be used such as potato, frozen green beans, frozen corn, frozen peas, zucchini, spinach, cabbage, kale, winter squash or canned beans. Be sure that soft vegetables are added at the end of cooking so they are not too cooked. Basically any left-over vegetables can be used.

Tips

- Use frozen wild mushrooms. Mushrooms do not over cook so add them with the tomatoes
- Cook softer vegetables last. For example spinach should be lightly cooked enough to warm.

Storing

- Refrigerator - Barley soup keeps well in the refrigerator for 3 to 4 days. If reheated to the boiling point, eaten then restored in the refrigerator it will last another 3 to 4 days.
- Freezer - Barley soup freezes well for a couple months
- Make Ahead - The soup thickens on standing as the barley absorbs the liquid, so add extra broth or water to reach the preferred thickness when you're reheating it in the microwave or on the stove.

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