

Heavenly Stewp

by Laurie Lester

"January
In January it's so nice
While slipping on the sliding ice
To sip hot chicken soup with rice
Sipping once, sipping twice
Sipping chicken soup with rice..."
Maurice Sendak

We're in the middle of winter and it's coooold! You need something hot to warm you up after playing in the snow. This recipe is sure to warm up your little snow angels!

My chicken soup with rice is really more like a stew, so, we'll just call it "stewp." This *stewp* is a healthy *meal* and the best part is, you can use the leftovers, *if there are any*, to make a second dinner! *Makes a full stockpot of stewp.*

Laurie's Chicken "Stewp" with Rice

2 Tbsp olive oil
4 stalks celery, sliced
2 large carrots, coarsely shredded
1 large onion, chopped
3 Tbsp. Flour
½ tsp fresh ground pepper, plus extra for topping
2- 10 oz cans chicken broth
4 cups water (You may add more during cooking)
3 Knorr Vegetable bouillon cubes
4 medium potatoes, peeled and cubed
4 cups wild rice mix (I use 2 packages of Mahatma Wild Rice mix cooked ahead)
2 large chicken breasts, cooked and diced
4 Tbsp chopped fresh parsley

1. Cook chicken. *Just foil poach the chicken for an hour at 350 degrees or use leftovers from another meal.*
2. In separate large saucepan, cook rice according to package directions; use an equal amount of olive oil instead of butter.
3. In large 8-quart stockpot, sauté all vegetables in olive oil (except potatoes) until onions are slightly translucent. Stir in flour and pepper to coat vegetables, pour in chicken stock, water, bouillon cubes, potatoes, chicken and 4 cups of the rice. *You'll probably need to add more water to just cover other ingredients; it should be a thick, chunky soup. Add another bouillon cube, 1 per two cups of extra water added.* Bring to a boil, reduce heat and simmer approx. 30 minutes, stirring occasionally. Cook until potatoes are cooked through.
4. Top with a sprinkle of fresh ground pepper and chopped parsley.

Tips:

To save time, use meat from a roasted chicken from your local grocer's deli *or* use a 13 oz. can of cooked chicken.

To make a vegetarian version, just leave out the chicken and chicken broth and use vegetable broth. You can add peas and/or top *stewp* with slivered almonds to add a little extra protein, crunch and flavor.

Make a creamy version by adding 1 1/2 cups of half & half during the last 5 minutes of cooking. Cook until heated through.

This is a great recipe if you have company coming, a large family or just want something you can reheat quickly throughout the week. You can halve this recipe easily if you don't want so much.

Bonus Quick Dinner Recipe:

Laurie's Chicken *Stewp* With Rice Pot Pie

5-6 cups leftover *Stewp*
Pie crust for two crust pie

Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Use your favorite piecrust recipe or store-bought crust, line bottom of pie plate with crust, fill with leftover *stewp*, using a slotted spoon so it won't be too soupy, top with second crust. Seal and crimp edges with a fork and put four slits in top of pie to let steam out. Line crust edges with pie crust liner or aluminum foil to prevent burning. Place pie on foil lined cookie sheet. Bake for 45 minutes or until golden brown and hot in center.

Serve with mashed potatoes, gravy, and a salad, yum!

Laurie Lester is Innkeeper/Owner of Willow Pond Bed & Breakfast.

www.willowpondbnb.com

Innkeeper@willowpondbnb.com