

Beef Barley and Veggie Soup

I was very surprised at how really, really good this soup is. It is thick, rich and hearty. Start early in the day or even the day before as it takes a little time to cook the beef and the barley. Vegetables can vary, check the market to see what is in season and that is what you should use.

Bring to a boil:

3 lb beef short ribs

8 C chicken broth (I use Better than Bouillon, it comes in a jar and should be in the aisle where the soups are)

2 C water

½ t dried rosemary

2 bay leaves

Simmer:

4 C water

¾ C barley

Salt

Blanch and shock:

4 oz baby carrots (I used regular carrots and sliced them)

1 C asparagus tips (I used broccoli florets because that is what is in season now)

8 oz summer squash, sliced into even sized pieces (I used zucchini since that was in the market)

Saute in 2T olive oil:

2 C button mushrooms, sliced

8 oz shallots, chopped

2 T garlic, minced

½ C dry sherry

½ C tomatoes, seeded, diced

1 T minced fresh parsley (I didn't have any so I skipped but it would be a very nice touch)

Bring ribs, broth, water and herbs to a boil over high heat in a large pot. Reduce heat to medium-low and simmer 3 hours or until beef is fork tender.

(Meanwhile prepare remaining soup ingredients.) Remove ribs and set aside, skim fat from broth, strain, and reserve for the base. When ribs are cool enough to handle, trim fat and gristle, then shred into bite sized pieces. (I cooked the ribs the day before. I stored the beef separate from the broth. The next day I was able to pick up the layer of fat from the top of the broth, in one piece, and discard.)

Simmer barley in salted water for 40 minutes or until tender; drain and set aside.

Blanch each type of veggie separately in boiling water 1-3 minutes (depending on the vegetable), or until just tender. Shock in ice water, drain, and set aside.

Saute shallots and garlic for a couple of minutes in a large pot over medium high heat 3-5 minutes. Add mushrooms and sauté until they begin to brown and their juices have evaporated. Deglaze pan with sherry; simmer until nearly evaporated, then add reserved broth (plus enough water to make 6 C). Add veggies, beef, and barley; simmer to heat through. Stir in the tomatoes and parsley, season with salt and pepper.

Source: Cuisine at Home Splendid Soups