

Chicken Stock

I always have homemade chicken stock in the freezer to use in soups and rice dishes. It is extra work and mess but when I think of all the packaging, waste and added salt I have saved over the years it seems worth it. Each batch is a little different depending on the time you simmer and what extra ingredients you need to use in your refrigerator or out of the garden.

1	chicken carcass or 2 lb chicken necks and bones
12 -14	cups water
2	bay leaves
1	onion
3	cloves garlic
4	whole cloves
1	carrot, cut in chunks
1	rib celery with leaves
1/2	parsnip, cut in chunks (optional)
1/4	cup fresh parsley, including stems or 1 Tbsp dry
1	whole hot pepper or 5 whole peppercorns
1	tsp salt
1 - 2	fresh sage leaves (optional)
1	sprig fresh rosemary (optional)
1/8	tsp anise seed (optional)
	Any other vegetable, avoid strongly flavoured ones
	Tomato adds a nice flavour but will colour the stock

- Put everything together in a large stock pot and bring to a boil.
- Reduce heat and simmer, covered for about 2 hours.
- Let cool for an hour if you have time then strain and discard solids.
- You may want to pick any remaining meat off the bones to use in a chicken soup, but most of the flavour is already in the stock.
- Refrigerate stock and discard fat from top of container before reheating. You may save some of the fat for "sweating" the vegetables in your soups.



MAKING STOCK WITH LEFTOVER BONES

The obvious time to make this stock is after preparing a roast chicken or turkey. Save the neck and giblets in the refrigerator while you cook the bird and put them, along with the carcass, right back in the roasting pan with the water and other ingredients. With a large turkey, the carcass, alone, gives enough flavour to the stock so you may freeze the neck for later. For even more flavour and nutrients save the water from cooking the vegetables and use it along with any bits of vegetables left in the pot.

Since it is usually the evening when I make stock from the carcass I will put the whole pot in the refrigerator overnight after it has boiled an hour or so and bring it back up to a boil the next day to finish and strain the stock. This gives time for the flavour to blend beautifully.