

# Butternut squash & lentil soup



3-4 portions

A plant protein based warming soup

## Ingredients

1 butternut squash  
100g red lentils  
2 tsp cumin seeds  
2 large garlic cloves  
200ml coconut milk  
1 litre veg stock

## Method

1. Dry fry the cumin seeds in a pan (with some chilli flakes if you like it hot) until they release their fragrance. Remove a few for garnish
2. Add the butternut squash, stock and lentils to the pan and bring to the boil, then simmer for about 30mins
3. Add the coconut milk and simmer for another 5 minutes
4. Whizz the soup with a stick blender or in a food processor until smooth. Add more stock if it's too thick for your liking

## Top tips

- Garnish with the toasted cumin seeds and if you have some, fresh coriander
- If you don't want to add the coconut milk add an extra 200ml of stock
- Try this recipe with any spices or a curry mix
- Swap the squash to sweet potatoes and add some carrots

# Chicken stock



The base for a variety of homemade meals

## Ingredients

1 chicken carcass  
1/3 onion, roughly chopped  
1 bay leaf  
10 peppercorns  
1 stick of celery, cut into chunks  
ends of veg (e.g carrots & green beans)

## Method

1. Put the chicken bones in a large pan (remove the skin as this adds unnecessary fat). Cartilage and other bits of meat all add flavour
2. Add the onion to the pan with the bay leaf, peppercorns and celery
3. Pour over enough water to cover the chicken (at least 2 litres) and bring to the boil
4. Reduce heat to simmer and cook for an hour or two with the lid on.
5. You can remove the lid, turn up the heat and cook for a further half hour to reduce the stock and make it more concentrated. Allow to cool then sieve it to get just the stock

## Top tips

- When you cook liquids without a lid the liquid will start to evaporate, therefore the stock will become more concentrated so you have less liquid in the pan. This is how you make soups and sauces thicker
- When you prepare vegetables always save the ends and put in a freezer bag – so when you decide to make stock you have the vegetables already – they don't even need defrosting, just stick them in
- Don't use brassica veg such as broccoli and cabbage as they don't flavour well and make the stock cloudy
- Keep in the fridge for up to 3 days or freeze (using freezer bags takes less space than a box)

# Asian chicken broth



2 portions

A fresh, vibrant and healthy meal

## Ingredients

600ml of chicken stock  
1 garlic clove, crushed  
2cm ginger, finely sliced into matchsticks  
1 nest of egg noodles  
Chicken – bits left from chicken carcass  
some cabbage, sliced  
½ carrot, finely cut into thin matchsticks  
20 green beans, cut in half

## To garnish

2 spring onions, sliced  
1 chilli, finely sliced  
fresh coriander leaves

## Method

1. In a large saucepan, add the garlic and ginger and let cook for 10 minutes to infuse the flavour into the stock – keep the lid on so the stock doesn't evaporate
2. Then add all the ingredients to the stock and cook for another 6 minutes
3. Share between 2 large bowls and add the garnish. Ideally eat with chopsticks and a spoon.

## Top tips

- The beauty of this dish is that you can use any bits of veg that you have in the cupboard
- When you make the homemade stock keep all the little bits of chicken off the carcass – that's all you need

# Chicken, leek & mushroom pie



2 portions

A classic combination with reduced pastry

## Ingredients

1 leek  
25g butter  
2 tbsp plain flour  
125g chicken stock  
50g cooked roast chicken  
70g mushrooms  
150g puff pastry (1/3 of a 500g block)  
Splash of milk (optional)  
1 egg, beaten

## Method

1. Preheat oven to 200C/gas mark 6
2. Slice the leek and put into a pan with the butter. With the lid on cook gently for approximately 5 minutes (until the leeks are soft)
3. Add the flour to the pan and stir over the heat for one minute so the flour is cooked. Then add the chicken stock and cook for 5 minutes until the stock thickens and you have a creamy sauce
4. Chop up the mushroom and add to the pan with the chicken and mix up
5. Share the mixture between 3 large ramekins
6. Cut 1/3 off a block of puff pastry and then cut that evenly into 3. Roll each chunk out so that it is the right shape to cover the ramekin. Place over the ramekin and using a pastry brush, brush each pie top with some beaten egg and put in the oven for 20 minutes

## Top tips

- Adding just a pastry lid means you are eating less pastry which is healthier for you