

St. Fairsted Farm's-Chicken & Dumplings Recipe

For the Chicken Broth:

6 plus quarts water
1 4-5 pound whole hen
3 teaspoons salt
1 onion sliced
4 stalks celery, chopped
1 whole head of garlic,
1 bay leaf
4-6 whole parsley leaves
1 teaspoon coarsely ground black pepper
1 tablespoon lemon juice

Dumplings

4 cups all purpose flour
2 tablespoon baking powder
2 ½ teaspoons of salt
2 cups plus 4 tablespoons buttermilk

1. Bring the water to a boil in a large pot. Place head of garlic inside chicken then add the chicken, 1 ½ teaspoons of salt, onion, celery, garlic, bay leaf, and parsley to the pot. Reduce the heat to simmer and cook the chicken, uncovered, for 2 hours.
2. When the chicken has cooked, remove it from the pot and set it aside. Strain the stock to remove all the vegetables and floating scum. You only want the stock and the chicken, so toss everything else out.
3. Pour 6 quarts of the stock back into the pot (keep the leftover stock, if any, for another recipe-it can be frozen). Add coarsely ground pepper, the remaining 1 ½ teaspoons of salt, and the lemon juice, then reheat the stock over medium heat while preparing the dumplings.
4. For dumplings, combine the flour, baking powder, 2 ½ teaspoons salt, and buttermilk in a medium bowl. Stir well until smooth, and then let the dough rest for 5-10 minutes. Roll the dough out onto a floured surface to about a 1/2 inch thickness.
5. Cut the dough into 1/2 inch squares and drop each square into the simmering stock. Use all of the dough. The dumplings will first swell and then slowly shrink as they partially dissolve to thicken the stock into a lovely gravy. Simmer for 20-30 minutes until thick. Stir often.
6. While the stock is thickening, the chicken will have become cool enough to handle. Tear all the meat from the bones and remove the skin. Cut the chicken meat into bite-size or a little bigger than bite-size pieces and drop them into the pot. Discard the skin and bones. Continue to simmer the chicken and dumplings for another 5-10 minutes, but don't stir too vigorously or the chicken will shred and fall apart. You want big chunks of chicken in the end.
7. When the gravy has reached the desired consistency, ladle portions onto plates and serve hot. Serve with your choice of steamed vegetables, or cornbread if desired.