

CopyCat Carrabba's Italian Grill Sicilian Chicken Soup

Ingredients

1 whole chicken, about 4 $\frac{1}{2}$ pounds, giblets removed (Or 8 cups of pre-made, good-quality chicken stock, and 1-2 large chicken breasts, cooked and shredded-to make this quicker)

1 large yellow onion, finely chopped (I reduced this to 1/4 cup of onions)

3 celery sticks, diced

3 carrots, diced

3 green bell peppers, cored and diced (I did not add this, and it still tasted great!-so optional)

3 medium baking potatoes, such as russet or Burbank, peeled and diced

1 can (14.5 ounces) diced tomatoes in juice

$\frac{1}{2}$ cup chopped fresh flat-leaf parsley (I used 2 Tablespoons of dried parsley)

4 garlic cloves, chopped (or 2 teaspoons of minced garlic)

Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper to taste

1 cup ditalini or other "soup pasta" (I used salad pasta which basically looks the same)

Directions

Put the whole chicken, onion, celery, carrots, bell peppers, potatoes, tomatoes and their juices in a large soup pot and add enough cold water to cover it all by one inch. Bring it to a boil over high heat, skimming off the foam that rises to the surface. Add the parsley, garlic, 1 tablespoon of salt and 1 teaspoon of pepper.

Reduce the heat to medium-low. Partially cover the pot and simmer until the chicken is falling off the bones, about 2 hours.

Using tongs, transfer the chicken to a large bowl and let cool for about 20 minutes. Keep the soup in the pot simmering.

Remove the meat from the chicken, discarding the skin and bones, taking care not to mangle the meat and keeping it in neat pieces. Tear or pull the boned chicken into large bite-sized pieces. (Tip: We prefer hand-pulled chicken to chopped chunks)

Meanwhile, bring a medium saucepan of water to a boil over high heat. Add salt to taste. Add the ditalini and cook according to the package directions until tender. Drain well. (Tip: do not add uncooked pasta to the soup, or it will soak up too much broth during cooking and make the soup very thick.)

Use a large slotted spoon or a potato masher, mash some potatoes in the pot to lightly thicken the broth. Add the chicken and pasta to the pot. Season salt and pepper. Serve hot.