

Basic White Chicken Stock

Swick

Serves 6 | Active Time: 25 minutes | Total Time: 4 hours

Chef's Notes

For good flavor and gelatin extraction, simmer the bones for at least 3 hours. And, the liquid should simmer during this time. If the temperature is relatively low, then a longer time will be necessary to yield better quality.

After simmering and straining, if the stock lacks gelatin and mouth feel, it can be reduced over gentle heat to concentrate the gelatin. A viscosity test can be performed by placing a small quantity of stock in a bowl and placing the bowl in the freezer for a few minutes to quickly chill. Make further adjustments as desired.

Ultimately, how much you reduce the stock is up to you. If the liquid is reduced by 50% or more, then a concentrate is created. This 'liquid gold' can be portioned in an ice tray, for example, and then removed and stored in a container in the freezer. The individual pieces can be added to soups or stews for flavor enhancement.

Step 1: Making and Cooking the Stock

- 6 lb chicken bones (backs and necks)
- cold water
- 3 ribs celery
- 3 carrots
- 3 onions
- 2 leeks
- 2 tsp whole, black peppercorns
- 2 bay leaves
- 10 to 12 stems fresh parsley
- 3 to 4 stems fresh thyme
- small bunch of celery leaves

To start the stock, rinse the bones under cold water and place them into a suitable-sized stock pot. Cover the bones with cold water by about 2 inches. Turn the heat to medium and slowly bring the bones to a simmer, making sure it doesn't come to a boil.

In the meantime, chop the mirepoix (onions, leeks, celery and carrots) into about 1/2" to 3/4" -inch pieces.

After the stock has simmered for about 30 minutes, skim one more time before adding the mirepoix.

Let the stock gently simmer for another 2 hours or so, skimming the surface as needed.

Then add the bouquet garni (peppercorns, bay leaves, parsley stems, fresh thyme and celery leaves), making sure to gently tuck it underneath the surface. Continue to simmer for about 30 minutes.

Step 2: Finishing the Stock

Once the stock has cooked for 3-4 hours, you can strain it. First, skim off as much fat as possible from the surface. Then gently remove the solids and discard them. Finally, strain the stock through a sieve lined with a piece of cheesecloth.

You can either use the stock immediately or cool it over an ice bath. Once cool, it can be stored in the refrigerator for a few days or it can be portioned and frozen for several months.