

Poached Chicken with Spelt

Serves 4

Ingredients:

1 medium chicken

4 sticks celery

2 medium onions

4 carrots

1 head garlic

1 thumb ginger

2 chillies

1 tbsp peppercorns

2 cloves

3 bay leaves

Handful of parsley/fresh thyme if you have it

1 glass wine

1 cup spelt grains/pearl barley

Salt to taste

Special equipment:

Large stock pan with lid



Method:

1. Cut the vegetables into large chunks (halve the garlic so that all the cloves are split), and put them into a stock pan with the chicken, herbs and spices.
2. Fill with water to just cover the bird, and add the wine. Bring to the boil, and then turn down the heat and simmer for around an hour.
3. Lift out the chicken and pierce the leg to make sure the juices run clear. Cover with foil and leave somewhere warm.
4. Meanwhile, bring the stock to the boil and add the spelt or barley. This should cook in around 10 minutes. Taste to make sure it's firm but soft enough to eat.
5. Salt the stock to taste, and serve in shallow bowls with the carved chicken.

This is a dish that needs something extra to make it sing. Serve it with salsa verde, persillade (chopped parsley, lemon zest and garlic), pesto or add shredded ginger, chillies, coriander and soy sauce at the end of cooking.