

Chicken Soup with Escarole, Lemon and Parmesan

Serves 2

Escarole is my chosen roughage for this soup (and the salad that follows), but other leafy greens like broccoli rabe, kale, or swiss chard would be a nice stand-in, just be prepared for more bitterness and less delicateness. This is one occasion where I wouldn't recommend Better Than Bouillion, since so much of the flavor and viscosity of the soup depends on honest-to-god chicken broth.

It's always annoying to make a recipe for chicken soup because it seems like a whole production. You've got to make the broth and pick the meat and it's just *a whole thing.* Except that's rarely the way I make chicken soup. Usually, I start with frozen chicken broth I made weeks (or months) ago, then add a boneless, skinless breast to poach in the broth for 12–15 minutes (thighs would work, too). This makes “chicken soup” possible sooner without the whole bird song and dance (which I love, just don't always have the time for). I recommend this method.

2 tablespoons olive oil, plus more for drizzling
2 garlic cloves, thinly sliced or finely chopped
4 anchovy fillets or 1 teaspoon fish sauce
Lots of cracked black pepper and/or crushed red chili flake
4 cups chicken broth (preferably made from a chicken— see here)
½ cup parmesan cheese, coarsely grated* (plus more for the top)
½ head escarole, torn into large pieces
1 cup picked chicken meat, if you've got it
1 lemon, for juicing
¼ thinly sliced onion (yellow, white, or red)
2 large egg yolks, optional
***I like to use a box grater here, not a microplane**

1. Heat 2 tablespoons oil in a medium pot over medium heat. Add garlic and cook, stirring occasionally until it starts to soften and toast a little, 3–4 minutes. Add anchovies and crushed red pepper flakes, if using. Cook, stirring occasionally until the anchovies are melted into the oil, a minute or so.

2. Add chicken broth and parmesan and bring to a simmer. Whisk until the parmesan is melted into the broth (it should not clump, it should stay pretty smooth). Add escarole and chicken (if using) and season to taste with salt and pepper. Stir until the chicken is warmed through and the escarole is wilted, a few minutes. Remove from heat and squeeze a whole lemon into the pot.

3. Divide among bowls and top with onion, one egg yolk (if using), more parmesan, and black pepper.

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