

Chicken Stew with Herbs & Barley

Serves 6

In 7th century England, herbs were one of the few flavourings available to cooks and were used heavily.

50g butter
1kg chicken joints
500g washed and trimmed leeks, thickly sliced
4 cloves garlic, chopped finely
150-175 g pearl barley
900 ml water
3 tablespoons white wine vinegar
2 bay leaves, salt, pepper
15 fresh, roughly chopped sage leaves

Remember to add the extra ingredients

Version 1

Add bacon

Version 2

Add celery and peas

Melt the butter in a heavy pan and fry the meat with the leeks and garlic till the vegetables are slightly softened and the meat lightly browned. Add the barley, water, vinegar, bay leaves and seasoning. Bring the pot to the boil, cover it and simmer gently for 1 - 1 1/2 hours or slow cook till the meat is really tender and ready to fall from the bone. Add the sage and continue to cook for half an hour. Adjust the seasoning to taste and serve in bowls.