

Greek Lemon Chicken Soup (Avgolemono): A Refreshing, Comforting Classic

The Ancient Art of Avgolemono



TIME
5-7 min

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INGREDIENTS

- 1 tbsp olive oil
- 1 lb boneless, skinless chicken breasts or thighs, cut into 1/2-inch cubes
- 1 medium yellow onion, finely diced
- 2 stalks celery, finely diced
- 3 cloves garlic, minced
- 6 cups chicken broth (low sodium recommended)
- 1/2 cup long-grain white rice (such as Basmati or Jasmine), rinsed
- 1/2 tsp salt (or to taste)
- 1/4 tsp black pepper
- 3 large eggs, at room temperature
- 1/4 cup fresh lemon juice (from 1-2 large lemons, plus more to taste)
- 2 tbsp fresh parsley or dill, chopped, for garnish

DIRECTIONS

1. Let's get this classic : Greek Lemon Chicken Soup simmering!
2. SautØ Chicken: In a large Dutch oven or heavy-bottomed pot, heat the olive oil over medium-high heat. Add the cubed chicken, season with salt and pepper, and cook for 5-7 minutes, stirring occasionally, until lightly browned on all sides. It doesn't need to be cooked through at this point. Remove the chicken from the pot and set aside.
3. SautØ Aromatics: Reduce heat to medium. Add the finely diced onion and celery to the pot. Cook for 5-7 minutes, stirring occasionally, until softened and translucent. Add the minced garlic and cook for 1 minute until fragrant.
4. Add : Broth & Rice: Pour in the chicken broth, scraping up any browned bits from the bottom of the pot. Stir in the rinsed long-grain white rice. Bring the mixture to a boil.
5. Simmer : Soup Base: Once boiling, reduce the heat to low, cover the pot, and let it simmer for 15-20 minutes, or until the rice is tender. Add the seared chicken back to the pot during the last 5 minutes of rice cooking to ensure it cooks through.
6. Prepare : Avgolemono (Crucial Tempering Step): In a medium bowl, whisk the 3 large eggs vigorously until light, frothy, and pale yellow (about 2-3 minutes). Slowly drizzle in the fresh lemon juice, whisking constantly until well combined. Temper the Eggs: Very slowly, ladle about 1 cup of the hot soup broth into the egg-lemon mixture, whisking constantly and vigorously to temper the eggs. This gradually raises their temperature, preventing them from scrambling.

7. **Combine : Avgolemono with Soup:** Remove the soup pot from the heat. Slowly pour the tempered egg-lemon mixture into the hot soup, whisking gently and continuously as you pour. This will thicken the soup and give it its characteristic creamy texture. Do NOT return the soup to a boil after adding the Avgolemono, as this will cause the eggs to curdle.
8. **Serve & : Garnish:** Taste and adjust seasoning (salt, pepper, and more lemon juice if desired) as needed. Ladle the hot Greek Lemon Chicken Soup into bowls, garnish generously with fresh chopped parsley or dill, and serve immediately.

SWAPS & NOTES

Chicken: Both chicken breasts and thighs work wonderfully.

For a quicker soup, you can use 2-3 cups of shredded cooked rotisserie chicken; add it when the rice is nearly done.

Rice: Long-grain white rice like Basmati or Jasmine is perfect as it cooks up fluffy.

Rinsing the rice beforehand helps remove excess starch, preventing the soup from becoming too thick or gummy.

TIPS FOR SUCCESS

Pat Chicken Dry: This ensures a good sear, adding flavor to the chicken and the soup base.

Rinse Rice: Rinsing helps prevent the rice from clumping and making the soup too starchy.

Whisk Eggs Thoroughly: Thoroughly whisked eggs create a smoother, creamier Avgolemono.

Temper Slowly: The success of Avgolemono relies on slowly adding hot broth to the egg mixture while whisking constantly.

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