

This serves anywhere from 4-8 people, depending on how much meat & vegetables you use; well, it's a soup, that's the point. More liquidy it could serve 10, I think.

Meatballs (see below)

2-3 chicken breasts

Diced carrots, peas, diced green beans, corn; fresh or frozen, whatever veg you like & have available

Chicken stock & beef stock; either or both—I like 3 parts chicken 1 part beef, but of course if all you have is water that's fine too.

Herbs de Provence (or whatever mixed herbs available)

olive oil—tsp or so

butter—2 tsp or so

salt & pepper

garlic powder (if available)

onion powder (if available)

flour (AP)

white wine (optional)

shallots (if available)

Dumplings (see bottom)

For the meatballs:

1 lb ground beef

a couple of handfuls of bread crumbs—maybe 1/3 cup?

3 Tbsp or so of Worcestershire sauce

1 1/2 Tbsp or so of herbs de Provence

Combine. Roll into small balls—maybe half an inch?

Bake in a 190C/375F oven for about 12 minutes if making ahead, or brown on all sides in the melted butter & oil before doing the chicken, and stir gently until cooked (remove before browning chicken).

Melt butter & oil together in stockpot with tight-fitting lid. Season chicken breasts on both sides with a little salt & pepper, and Herbs de Provence (or whatever herbs available). Brown well in butter & oil. Remove.

Add garlic and onion powder, maybe 2-3 tbsp or so of each? I don't usually measure this stuff out. If you like a lot of garlic and onion, use more. If not, use less. Add shallots, stir to soften.

Add a tbsp or two of flour, stir.

Deglaze with wine (if using; maybe ½ a cup or so?), stir well to scrape up all the stuff on the bottom.

Add chicken back in, add meatballs. Add water or stocks until meats are covered by an inch or so. Simmer at least half an hour to cook chicken; this can simmer as long as you like, really, as long as you keep it from drying out. It's not a really liquidy soup though, it's a really thick one. Add the vegetables now.

When the chicken is cooked, take it out and shred it, then add it back in.

Mix some of the hot stock with flour—maybe ¼ cup stock with ½ cup flour—and add it to the stew to thicken (if desired; you may like a more liquidy soup). Taste, adjust seasonings.

You could serve this just like that, a chicken-and-meatball soup, or you can make dumplings.

Dumplings:

2 cups sifted AP flour (they rise better if the flour is sifted)

3 tsp baking powder

1 tsp salt

2 tbsp shortening

1/2 cup parsley*

1 cup milk

Cut the shortening into the flour, salt, and baking powder combo. Add parsley*. Add milk. Stir.

Drop by large tsp into lightly boiling soup. Work quickly. When you've added it all, cover the pot tightly. Turn the heat down. DO NOT PEEK. I cannot

emphasize this strongly enough. DO NOT, DO NOT, DO NOT PEEK. If you do the dumplings will be hard and yucky.

Cook 20 mins. Serve.

You can use other meats if you want, or you don't have to make meatballs and can just use ground beef, or of course leave out the beef or the chicken if you don't have them. You can shred leftover roast chicken or beef rather than cooking fresh. The point is really just that you can throw anything you have in there, and the herbs sort of make it cohesive.