

Jewish Penicillin

From *A Year in Chicken Soup* by Hattie Garlick on Talking of Food. A recipe by Nancy Honey.

Ingredients

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| 1 whole | chicken (preferably an old farmyard hen or boiling fowl if available) |
| 6 | carrots, <i>scraped, topped and tailed and cut in half</i> |
| | celery |
| 3 large | white onions, <i>cut into halves</i> |
| 6–8 cloves | garlic, peeled but left whole |
| | <i>bouquet garni</i> |
| 6–10 | whole black peppercorns |
| | rice or noodles to serve |

Method

In a very large pot put in the whole, raw, rinsed chicken. Surround it with the carrots and about the same amount of celery, including some of the leafy bits. Add the onions (traditionally white, but Nancy Honey often uses red). Put in the garlic and the *bouquet garni* (thyme, rosemary, parsley and bay leaf in a big bunch tied up with thread) and about 6-10 whole black peppercorns. Add masses of cold water to cover everything almost to the top of the pot, as a lot will boil away.

Bring it to the boil, then simmer VERY slowly (almost not boiling) for about 3 hours, turning the contents occasionally. NH likes to do this with the pan uncovered, but you can partially cover if necessary.

You should let the water boil away until it tastes quite chickeny, but we will improve the flavour in a moment. Let the whole thing cool thoroughly – might have to be about 3 hours or overnight.

When cool, remove the whole chicken and take all the meat off the bones and discard bones, shin and any gristle. Discard the bunch of herbs. Remove the veg from the broth and put aside.

Taste and improve the liquid by boiling down, adding stock cubes (NH swears by Marigold powder) or boil the liquid down a lot and add clear chicken stock.

When the broth is nice and chickeny, add back the chicken meat and veg and serve with either rice or noodles in the soup, but cooked separately.