

SLOW COOKER ROOT VEGETABLE SOUP W/ PEARL BARLEY

Serves: 8-10

Prep: 30-60 mins (*Dependent on skill and desired serving size.)

Cooking time: 4-7 hrs (*Dependent on SC setting.)

Type: Main meal

Tools: Colander, chopping board, sharp knife, slow cooker

Courtesy of: Eat2Health Blog



This is a great autumnal or winter vegetable-based soup. It's easy to execute and adapted not only to the season but your taste buds! Our variation contains a great blend of herbs and some delicious (chunky) veggies! The peas and pearl barley provide a great source of protein, but feel free to swap them for your favourite type of legume, pulse and/or grain; smoked seitan or tofu would also make a tasty addition! Diet permitting, you could also add a little lean beef or chicken (we think that this could also work quite well!). Apart from the pearl barley, everything else is thrown into the slow cooker so life can continue being simple, delicious and cozy!

Ingredients

750g	Baking potatoes	2g	Dried Sage
500g	Parsnips	1	Bay Leaf
500g	Swede	2g	Ground Black pepper
420g	Carrot	½ tsp	Salt
380g	White onion	2L	Vegetable Stock (low-salt; GF if required), prepared
300g	Bell pepper	800ml	Water
9g	Garlic clove	300g	Frozen Peas, defrosted
200g	Savoy cabbage	64g	Corn flour
12g	Flat Leaf Parsley	60g	Dried Pearl Barley/person
8g	Fresh Rosemary		
8g	Fresh Thyme		

Directions

1. Wash and then chop the potato into chunks. Wash, trim the ends and quarter the parsnip. Transfer the potato and parsnip into a slow cooker.
2. Wash, peel and chop the swede into chunks. Wash, trim the ends and slice the carrot; transfer the vegetables into the slow cooker. **Tip:** *The only root vegetable we peeled was the swede; it's time saving, but it also adds some extra nutrients to the soup (just remember to give your veggies a good scrub first)!*
3. Peel and dice the onion. Wash, remove the stem and core and then roughly chop the bell pepper. Peel and dice the garlic; transfer the vegetables into the slow cooker.

4. Wash and roughly slice (or shred) the cabbage leaves. Wash the parsley; remove the leaves from its stem and roughly chop them. Remove the rosemary sprigs from its stem and roughly chop them. Remove the thyme leaves from its stem.
5. Add the cabbage, parsley, rosemary, thyme, sage, bay leaf, black pepper and 1/2 tsp of salt into the slow cooker. Add the pearl barley (if applicable*).
6. Prepare the stock. Pour in the hot stock and some (just boiled) water. Cover with a lid. Cook on a high heating setting for about 3.5 hrs or on a low heat setting for 7-8hrs instead.
7. When there is about 40 minutes of cooking time left, defrost the peas. Add the corn flour to a small dish with equal parts water; stir into a paste to form a 'slurry'. Add the peas into slow cooker. Whilst stirring, pour in the slurry. Stir until dissolved and combined. Cover with the lid. Cook for a further 40 mins.
8. In the meantime, cook the pearl barley according to the packet instructions.
9. Stir and season the soup to taste before serving.
10. Serve warm. Place some pearl barley into a large serving bowl (if applicable). Ladle the soup over the barley. Stir together. Garnish with some parsley (if preferred).

Enjoy!

Notes:

- Our pearl barley took 30 mins to cook. We cooked it separately and would recommend doing so, unless this is only going to be served as 'one meal'. We have found in the past that the pearl barley keeps absorbing liquid... so your next day leftovers will be more barley than broth!

Tip: We lightly oiled and seasoned the leftover pearl barley before storing it to prevent it becoming one, big flavourless blob!

- *You'll find that we initially kept the liquid to a minimum; we were waiting to see how much water was given off in the first 3 hours before adding any more! However, we have advised for everyone to add all of the liquid at start of the cooking process.*
- *Quick Food Fact: Per serving (based on 10 servings!), this soup provides you with about 3.3 servings of vegetables towards your 5-A-Day!*