

Beef Broth



The best thing about winter has to be piping hot bowls of thick, warming soup. Packed full of goodness from Scotland's seasonal vegetables good soup is the perfect welcome home after a hard day's work. Once it's made it's a simple case of reheating and a large bowl of broth and a hunk of bread fills you up nicely.

Like all Scots, I come from a long line of great soup makers. I love the tradition of passing down soup recipes, each family adding their own wee twist to the mix. We've all know that, along with football and cars, grown men in a pub will happily debate at length as to why their mum's soup is the best.

My Grandad made it the old Scots way when a bit of anything available was thrown into the pot and the beef or mutton was fished out and used cold and fatty in his pieces the next day. Not a thing wasted. My mum, of course, makes the best soup ever and the trick I've been assured is to use proper stock and dirty vegetables – no cubes crumbled into hot water or pre peeled carrots here! And it needs to be thick enough to stick to your ribs.

We're going for a Beef Broth here made with the strong tasting Boiling Beef from our Highland Cattle. It works equally well made with chicken to give hen broth or mutton to give Scotch Broth. Traditionally Broth is a bit of everything and in years long ago Scots would eat it as a main meal. It's cheap, nutritious and extremely filling and ingredients can be substituted depending on your own tastes. I'm a bit of a traditionalist in this way – throw what you have in and eat it second or third day when the flavours have all soaked through each other and it's good and thick. Perfect.

Beef Broth

Ingredients

1 large leek, sliced
2 large carrots, 1 sliced and 1 grated
1 Onion, finely chopped
3 – 4 Stalk Celery, finely chopped
1 small Turnip, cut into cubes
Small – Medium Piece Highland Beef for Boiling
250gm Broth mix or Pearl Barley
3 – 5 litres of water depending on how thick you like it!
Salt and Pepper

Method

Sweat off the onions in a large soup pan and add the remainder of the vegetables. Cook slowly for a few minutes before adding your water, boiling beef and broth mix. Bring to the boil and simmer for an hour to an hour and a half. Any fat that gathers on the top of the soup (this is particularly relevant when using mutton) can be skimmed off as you cook. Alternatively, pop it in the fridge overnight and remove the disc of solidified fat before reheating.

Season to taste.

You can substitute boiling beef for stock cubes and it works well for vegetarians this way - but don't tell my mum.