



YIVO'S SHINE ONLINE  
EDUCATIONAL SERIES

# A Seat at the Table

## A JOURNEY INTO JEWISH FOOD

sponsored by EDWARD BLANK AND FAMILY, THE COVENANT FOUNDATION, and THE SHINE TRUST

RECIPE COURTESY OF

### The GEFILTERIA

Excerpted from the book THE GEFILTE  
MANIFESTO by Jeffrey Yoskowitz & Liz Alpern.  
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## CLASSIC CHICKEN SOUP

LIZ: *The smell of chicken soup—the undeniable scent of BUBBES (grandmothers) and Friday night dinners—is the backdrop to the Ashkenazi kitchen. “How could one greet so important a guest as the Holy Sabbath with only BORSCHT or barley soup?” asks Hirsz Abramowicz, explaining the importance of chicken soup for the Sabbath from his days as a Jewish villager in prewar Lithuania. “That would be a profanation.”*

*Let the chicken, vegetables, spices, and water simmer slowly, for hours, as you POTCHKIE around the house. Once the broth is sufficiently cooked, let it cool, then leave it in the*

*fridge overnight. It only gets better with time. If you’re serving your soup right away, pull out the carrots and celery before straining, and chop them into small pieces to serve in the soup. Since I always make my chicken soup in advance, I strain out all the vegetables and then toss in diced fresh carrots and celery the next day when reheating. It only takes about 20 minutes at a simmer for them to cook through. Be sure to always salt to taste, no matter what chicken you’re using. And don’t worry too much in general about the exact measurements in the recipe below. If you only have three celery stalks, you’ll be fine. Also, dill is an optional ingredient, as it can sometimes dominate the flavor of the broth, and not everyone give its broth the time it deserves.*

### ► MAKES ABOUT 2 QUARTS SOUP; SERVES 6 TO 8

- 2 tablespoons** vegetable oil  
or schmaltz (page 35)
- 3 pounds** chicken parts, pieces,  
or whole carcass
- 3** medium onions, washed and quartered
- 4** carrots, peeled and halved lengthwise
- 4** celery stalks with leaves, halved lengthwise
- 4** garlic cloves, crushed
- 9 to 10 cups** cold water
- 3** dried bay leaves
- 1½ tablespoons** whole black peppercorns
- 4** sprigs fresh parsley
- 4** sprigs fresh thyme
- 3** sprigs fresh dill (optional)
- 1½ to 3 tablespoons** kosher salt

- 1.** If desired, remove excess fat and skin from the chicken and reserve for making schmaltz (page 35).
- 2.** In a large, heavy-bottomed soup pot, heat the oil over medium heat. Add the chicken, skin-side down (working in batches if all the chicken will not fit at once) and brown for about 10 minutes, until the chicken is aromatic and golden brown. Add the onions, carrots, celery, and garlic and cook, stirring, until the onions become slightly translucent and aromatic, about 10 minutes more.
- 3.** Pour the cold water into the pot; enough to cover the chicken and vegetables. Add the bay leaves, peppercorns, parsley, thyme, dill (if using), and 1½ tablespoons of the salt. Cover and simmer over low heat for at least 3 hours, occasionally lifting the lid and skimming off any foam that rises to the surface.
- 4.** Strain the liquid through a fine-mesh strainer into a large bowl or other container, pressing down on the vegetables with a ladle to squeeze out as much concentrated flavor as possible. If you're serving the soup right away, pull out a couple of carrots and celery stalks before straining. Chop them up and place in bowls, with bits of cooked onion and cooked chicken and dumplings, and ladle in the broth. Garnish with dill or parsley. If only making broth, reserve the chicken pieces for soup or for Grandpa Joe's Famous Chicken Salad (page 192). Taste and add salt as needed. Let cool, then refrigerate overnight.
- 5.** The next day, remove any fat that has solidified on the surface. Chicken broth will keep in the refrigerator for up to 5 days, but freezes well for months. Serve with Rustic Matzo Balls (page 133), Beef Kreplach (page 135), Egg Lokshen "Noodles" (page 145), or other starches, like kasha or rice.



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## RUSTIC MATZO BALLS

*JEFFREY: In the days before commercial matzo meal production, cooks used to make their own. Using our Make-at-Home Matzo (page 94), you can create your own incredible DIY matzo ball. These matzo balls are slightly more sinker than floater because of the heft of homemade matzo meal, but I like to think that they straddle the line. Schmaltz adds a lot of flavor, but the recipe also works with oil. If using oil, it's best to use broth, not water, for additional depth. Fold in bits of chicken and parsley or carrot for flourish and texture. Serve matzo balls in a steaming bowl of chicken broth (page 130) or vegetable broth (page 123).*

### ► MAKES ABOUT 10 MATZO BALLS

**3** whole matzos, store-bought or homemade (page 94)

**¼ cup** store-bought matzo meal

**2** large eggs

**¾ teaspoon** kosher salt, **plus 1½ tablespoons** for boiling water

**½ cup** Classic Chicken Soup broth (see page 130) or water, at room temperature,  
plus more broth for serving

**3 tablespoons** schmaltz (page 35) or vegetable oil

**1 tablespoon** chopped fresh parsley (*optional*)

**3 quarts** water

**¼ cup** bits of chicken, celery, and onions from making Classic Chicken Soup (page 130; *optional*)

1. In a food processor, pulse the whole matzos until a coarse matzo meal forms and you see a dusting of powder on the sides of the processor bowl. (You can also crush the matzos in a large zip-top bag with a meat tenderizer or hammer. This can be an especially helpful method with homemade matzo, which sometimes doesn't grind well in the processor.) Each piece of matzo is equivalent to about ¼ cup matzo meal, so you should have ¾ cup crushed matzo. Combine this homemade matzo meal with the store-bought meal in a small bowl.

- 2.** In a separate bowl, whisk together the eggs,  $\frac{3}{4}$  teaspoon of the salt, the broth, and schmaltz or oil. Gently fold the matzo meal into the egg mixture, stirring well to combine, but don't overmix. If desired, toss in some chopped parsley and bits of shredded chicken and vegetables. Cover with a plate or plastic wrap and refrigerate for 30 minutes.
- 3.** In a wide soup pot, heat the water with  $1\frac{1}{2}$  tablespoons of the salt. Remove the bowl from the fridge and stir the matzo mixture so that the liquid in the bottom is integrated. Place a bowl of cold water nearby, and using clean, wet hands, form small balls of about 1 heaping tablespoon each from the matzo meal mixture (this will yield about 10 matzo balls total) and place them in the boiling water. They will expand as they cook. Cover and cook over medium heat for 25 minutes.
- 4.** Serve the matzo balls in individual bowls of heated broth. If not serving immediately, the cooked balls may be refrigerated for up to 5 days and brought to room temperature before being placed into hot soup.