

# Vegetarian Lemon Barley Soup

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Servings: 6

## Ingredients

- 2 tablespoon olive oil
- 1 large onion chopped
- 4 large carrots halved lengthwise and finely sliced
- 3 celery stalks chopped
- 3 garlic cloves minced
- ½ teaspoon dried oregano
- 32 oz vegetable broth
- 4 cups of water
- 1 zucchini small diced
- 1/2 cup pearly barley, soaked overnight (or you can use brown rice, quinoa or any other grain)
- 1 bay leaf
- 1/8 to 1/4 cup fresh lemon juice
- ¼ cup parsley, chopped
- ¼ cup dill, chopped
- 5-6 scallions, chopped



## Steps

1. Heat the olive oil over medium heat. Add the onion, carrots, celery and garlic. Cook for 5 minutes until vegetables are soft.
2. Add the oregano, salt and pepper and stir.
3. Pour the vegetable broth and water and bring to a boil.
4. Stir in the zucchini, barley and bay leaf. Reduce heat to a low simmer and cook covered for 15 minutes until quinoa is cooked through.
5. Reduce heat to low and stir in as much of the lemon juice as you'd like, and the chopped herbs.

## Notes

- Storage: Store any leftovers in an airtight container. They will last about 4-5 days in the fridge.

## Fennel Summer Salad with Herb Roasted Olives

The combination of fennel, summer fruits, herbs, and olives is nutritious and unique. It is common in the Mediterranean especially in Spain. Roasting olives in stock, herbs, and spices adds depth of flavor. The olives can also be served on their own as a tapas dish.

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Servings: 12

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### Ingredients

#### Herb Roasted Olives:

- 20 brine-cured pitted olives
- ½ cup vegetable stock
- ¼ cup olive oil
- 1 shallot, finely chopped
- 1 tbsp dried rosemary
- 1tsp lemon zest
- ½ tsp fennel seeds
- Freshly ground pepper, to taste

#### Salad:

- 2 firm yellow nectarines (or another stone fruit)
- 1 bulb fennel
- 2 Persian cucumbers
- 1 small red onion, thinly sliced
- 1 bunch mint
- ½ cup Marcona almonds, roughly chopped

#### For the dressing:

- 1 tbsp apple cider vinegar
- 3 tbsp balsamic vinegar
- ½ lemon to juice + zest
- ⅓ cup olive oil
- Salt and Pepper, to taste

### Steps

#### Herb Roasted Olives:

1. Preheat the oven to 350F. Arrange the olives in an 8 or 9 inch pie plate. Combine the broth, oil, shallot, rosemary, lemon zest, fennel seeds, and pepper in a small bowl. Mix well.
2. Pour mixture over the olives and stir to combine. Bake uncovered for 30 minutes, stirring 3 or 4 times. Remove from the oven and allow to cool to room temperature before preparing the

olives for the salad.

#### Salad:

1. Slice the red onion thinly, put it in a small bowl with apple cider vinegar and add water to cover it. Soak for at least 20 minutes.
2. Cut the nectarines and peaches and set aside in a mixing bowl.

Use a mandolin to thinly slice the fennel, yellow squash and the cucumber and add to the mixing bowl.

Separate the mint leaves from the branches and thinly chop the mint.

3. Make the dressing: whisk the balsamic vinegar, lemon juice, and zest. Slowly whisk in the olive oil to emulsify. Season with salt and pepper to taste and adjust flavors if necessary.
4. Drain the red onion and toss in with the mixing bowl of vegetables and fruit. Toss in the chopped roasted olives and dressing, pouring in the dressing a little at a time just to coat.
5. The salad can be served right away or can sit and marinate until serving time.

## Asparagus and Spring Peas Barley Risotto, Citrus Zest and Parmesan

### Ingredients

For the risotto:

- 300g pearl barley / Freekeh
- 2.4 litres vegetable stock
- 100 ml white wine
- 90ml olive oil
- 120g unsalted butter
- 1 medium shallot, peeled and finely diced
- 2 garlic cloves, peeled and finely chopped
- 3 thyme sprigs
- 1 bay leaf



For the greens:

- 200g watercress / spinach or other greens
- 1 bunch asparagus
- 100g spring peas or fava beans

To finish:

- Juice and zest of 1 lemon
- Coarse sea salt and black pepper
- Parmesan/Pecorino Romano
- Roasted Pine Nuts or Sunflower Seeds (Optional)

### Steps

1. Bring a pot of water to a boil, blanch the spinach/greens for 30 seconds, then transfer to a colander with a slotted spoon. Rinse under cold water (this will help prevent discoloration), then squeeze out the excess moisture, transfer to a blender with 100 ml of the stock, half a teaspoon of salt and a few cracks of black pepper. Blitz until smooth.
2. Keeping the pot of water on the boil, add the spring peas and blanch for 60 seconds, transfer to a colander, rinse under cold water and set aside. Trim the edge of the asparagus (about 1.5-2 inches of the bottom) and slice the asparagus to 1-inch long pieces, leaving the heads intact. Add the asparagus to the boiling water and blanch for 30 seconds, transfer to a colander, rinse under cold water and set aside with the peas.
3. Bring stock to a simmer in a saucepan over medium heat. Reduce heat and keep warm.
4. Melt the butter and heat the oil in a large skillet or wide-bottomed pot. Fry the shallot and garlic for six to seven minutes, stirring often, until soft but not colored. Add the barley/Freekeh, thyme and bay leaf; stir to coat all the grains, 3-4 minute. Add the white wine, stir, and leave it alone until it is nearly absorbed, 2 to 3 minutes.
5. Stir, add a ladle of broth, and stir again. Cook undisturbed until the broth is absorbed, 3 minutes. Repeat until grains are cooked through (20 to 30 minutes of total cook time)

for the barley or 15–20 minutes for the Freekeh). Turn off heat. Remove the thyme and bay leaf and discard of them.

6. Add the reserved green "smoothie", asparagus and English peas. Stir gently for 2 minutes. Add the Parmesan and lemon zest and juice and taste to correct seasoning, add the nuts last minute. Serve immediately, with more grated cheese over top, if desired.

## White Fish Baked in Parchment Paper with Spinach, Lemon Butter, Parmesan and Sun Dried Tomatoes

Servings: 8

### Ingredients

- 8 - 6 oz fillets of firm white fish (cod, bass, grouper, haddock, catfish or snapper)
- 6 oz butter
- 3 shallots, thinly sliced
- 3 garlic cloves, thinly sliced
- Juice and zest from 2 lemons
- 3 bunches spinach
- 6 oz grated Parmesan
- 6 oz sun dried tomatoes, drained and chopped
- 1 bunch parsley chopped
- Salt and pepper



### Steps

1. Preheat oven to 425 F.
2. Fold a large sheet of parchment paper in half and cut it to form a heart shape when opened. It should be large enough to hold all the food, plus a couple extra inches. Rele
3. Lightly oil the fillets and give them a sprinkling of salt.
4. Arrange a handful of spinach, in the middle of the parchment paper and top with the fish, salt and pepper

Drizzle lemon juice and finish with a little butter cube, the tomatoes and some grated parmesan.

5. With the stack of ingredients on the parchment, start making very tight, closely overlapping little folds at the top of the heart and work your way around, towards the bottom. Twist and fold the bottom end over. You should leave enough space around the food to allow the air to expand and circulate. Slide into a baking sheet
6. Bake 12-18 minutes (depends on the thickness of the fillet) and transfer to a serving plate.
7. Cut open the paper with scissors, add a splash of lemon juice and a pinch of salt and serve right away.

## Knafeh

Shredded Phyllo Dough and Sweet Cheese Pastry with Rose Water and Pistachios

Servings: 8-10

### Ingredients

For the cheese filling:

- 500 g Farmer's Cheese / White Cheese / Ricotta
- 300 g mozzarella
- 100 g goat cheese
- 1 package (500 g) frozen kunafe pastry (thawed one hour on the counter)
- 1 cup butter
- 4-8 drops orange food coloring (powder, paste or drops)

Rose-scented simple syrup:

- 1½ cups water
- 1½ cups sugar
- Juice and zest of ½ lemon
- 2-3 star anise
- 2-3 tbsp Rose Water
- ½ cup ground pistachio, to garnish

### Steps

1. Prepare the rose-scented simple syrup: put all the ingredients in a small pot and bring to boil for 2-3 minutes then leave to chill.
2. In the microwave oven or in a pan over low heat, melt the butter gently to avoid burning.
3. Prepare the pan 12-15 inch pan or roasting dish. Spread 4 Tablespoons of the butter in the pan. Add the orange coloring a little at a time. Using a pastry brush, spread the butter and the coloring evenly all over the pan and up the sides.
4. Preheat the oven to 350° F.
5. Prepare the kunafe pastry. Remove from package and cut into small pieces using a sharp knife.

Place pastry in a large bowl and gradually pour the remaining hot butter over top. Use the full amount of butter or the pastry will be dry or stick to the pan. Using your fingers, mix in the butter to evenly coat the strands of pastry.

6. Mix cheeses in a bowl to create the cheese filling.



7. Layer the pastry. For the bottom layer, sprinkle handfuls of the buttered pastry and press into the prepared pan going slightly up the sides. Use approximately half the pastry mixture or a bit more to completely cover the pan. (This will be the top when the pastry is flipped.)

Add the cheese filling, spreading the cheese evenly and pressing to cover completely. Cover with the remaining layer of pastry, evening it out and pressing gently.

8. Bake in the preheated oven for 30 to 35 minutes until pastry becomes crisp and slightly golden.

Remove pastry from oven and give it a gentle shake. The kunafe will separate from the sides of the pan. If not, separate with a butter knife.

9. Invert the hot kunafe onto a serving platter.
10. Pour the cold simple syrup over the hot pastry until the kunafe is saturated and glistening. Reserve the remaining syrup to serve in a small pitcher on the side.
11. Cut the kunafe into squares or diamonds. Garnish with pistachio nuts and serve while still hot.

## Notes

- Leftovers can be stored for up to four days in the refrigerator and warmed up in the oven or microwave.