

SPRING CHICKEN AND VEGETABLE STEW

1 whole chicken, skinned and cut into pieces (3-3 1/2 lbs. whole chicken **OR** 2 1/2 lbs. chicken thighs, trimmed) – you can also combine thighs and breasts

Salt and ground black pepper

Olive oil and or butter

1-2 medium leeks, trimmed, halved lengthwise, thoroughly washed, and sliced thin

1 large white onion, cut into medium dice

3 medium carrots, cut into medium dice

3 medium celery stalks, cut into medium dice

1 tablespoon fresh thyme (fresh garden Lemon Thyme is wonderful)

1/4 teaspoon hot red pepper flakes

3 garlic cloves, minced

1 cup dry white wine

2 bay leaves

5 cups chicken broth

1 1/2 pounds potatoes cut into 1 inch pieces

1 cup peas, frozen is ok

1/2 cup optional vegetables, green beans, snap peas, lima beans, fava beans

3 oz fresh garden greens (spinach, kale, swiss chard) tough stems removed

Garnish –

Zest and juice from one lemon

1 small handful fresh dill – roughly chopped

1 small fresh parsley – roughly chopped

Sprinkle chicken pieces with salt and pepper. Working in batches, sauté the chicken, with a coating olive oil or butter until it browns, lightly is ok, but be patient, do not move it, let it brown. It will not be cooked through; transfer to a plate and set aside. Add chopped vegetables, (onion, leek, celery, carrot), salt, thyme, red pepper flakes and sauté until softened. Adding additional olive oil or butter as needed. (the salt will help sweat the vegetable, its important) Add garlic; sauté until fragrant, about a minute.

Add wine and bay leaves; bring to a boil, let reduce for a few minutes. Return chicken to the pot, along with the broth and potatoes; bring to a steady simmer. Cover and cook for 20 minutes. Once potatoes have softened, begin to mash them to create some thickness to the stew. If you are using the whole chicken pieces, it will need to cook a bit longer. That's fine, just be patient. Probably another 30 minutes, or until the chicken is falling off the bone. Remove the chicken pieces and bay leaves. Shred the chicken, removing the bones. Add the

chicken back into the pot and proceed. Assumably you have already slightly mashed up the potatoes with your masher and created some texture. Add your greens and peas, cook and heat through. Add lemon, zest, juice, herbs and taste. Adjust salt level if necessary. Serves 8-10

NOTES – the whole chicken version is not necessary, but will undoubtedly be more flavorful. Vegetarian option, to add a small pasta, like orzo, pearl cous cous. 1/2 cup will do. You can also add some beans, like white cannellini beans or garbanzo. And of course use a vegetable stock and just forgo the chicken for a vegetarian version using the additional beans and pasta. All else remains the same.