

# The Chef's Table

## CLASSIC CUISINE

By Helen Nash

Here are a few of my favorite,  
fairly hearty recipes for cold, wintry days.

### Chicken Soup with Shiitake Mushrooms

6 servings

This is a healthy, easy-to-prepare soup. Most of us have chicken stock on hand, and the other ingredients are easily available.

*3/4 pound fresh shiitake mushrooms*  
*6 cups chicken stock*

*Helen Nash is the author of Kosher Cuisine (New Jersey, 1995) and Helen Nash's Kosher Kitchen (New Jersey, 2000). She lives in New York City.*

*6 scallions, including the green parts, cut into 3-inch pieces;  
cut the pieces into thick matchsticks*  
*2 cloves garlic, crushed to a paste with 1 teaspoon salt*  
*1-inch piece of ginger, finely chopped*  
*2 cups loosely packed baby spinach leaves*  
*Kosher salt*  
*Freshly ground black pepper*

Cut off mushroom stems and discard. Clean the caps with a damp paper towel, and thinly slice them. Pour the stock into a saucepan, and bring to a boil. Add the mushrooms and the remaining ingredients, except for the spinach. Boil for a few minutes, and season to taste. Add the spinach, bring to a boil, correct the seasoning, and serve.

*Chicken Soup  
with Shiitake Mushrooms*

## Beef Stew

*12-14 servings*

*6 pounds eye of the rib cut into uniform cubes,  
about 1 1/2 to 2 inches, trimmed of fat*  
*2 tablespoons flour*  
*4 tablespoons olive oil*  
*3 medium onions, finely chopped*  
*6 cloves garlic, finely chopped*  
*1 1/2 cups dry red wine*  
*A 35-ounce can of peeled tomatoes (including liquid)  
coarsely chopped*  
*1 tablespoon Worcestershire sauce\**  
*2 tablespoons fresh thyme, plus extra for garnish*  
*1 1/2 pounds pearl onions, blanched in boiling water*  
*1 1/2 pounds peeled baby carrots*  
*Kosher salt*  
*Freshly ground black pepper*

Preheat oven to 350°.

Pat meat dry with paper towels. Spread flour on a sheet of wax paper.

Heat 3 tablespoons oil in a heavy skillet. Dip a few pieces of meat at a time into the flour, shake off any excess, and sear over medium-high heat, very lightly, turning with tongs. Remove with tongs and place in a large heavy saucepan with a cover. As you finish searing the meat, salt and pepper it lightly.

Heat the remaining tablespoon of oil in the skillet. Add the chopped onions and garlic, and sauté for a few minutes. Add the onions and garlic to the meat along with the wine, tomatoes, Worcestershire sauce, thyme, pearl onions and carrots. Bring to a boil, covered, over medium heat.

Transfer to the oven to cook for about 1 1/2 hours, or until the meat is tender but not falling apart. Season to taste, and serve garnished with the extra thyme.

\*Make sure to buy Worcestershire sauce that has an OU, not an OU-Fish.

## Barley with Carrots, Onions and Parsley

*6-servings*

Barley is an underrated grain that I like to serve as an accompaniment to meat or poultry.

*1 cup medium pearl barley*

*2 tablespoons olive oil*  
*2 medium carrots, peeled and finely chopped*  
*1 medium onion, finely chopped*  
*1 1/2 cups vegetable broth*  
*Kosher salt*  
*1/2 cup loosely packed Italian parsley, finely chopped*

Heat a medium heavy saucepan, add the barley, and stir with a wooden spoon until barley turns light brown and smells nutty. Transfer to a bowl.

In the same saucepan heat the oil, add carrots and onion, and sauté, covered, over medium-low heat, stirring from time to time until the vegetables are almost tender.

Add barley and stock, and bring to a boil over high heat. Lower the heat and cook, covered, until barley is tender and liquid is absorbed, about 25 minutes. If liquid is absorbed and barley is not tender add a few tablespoons of boiling water and continue cooking. Season with salt, and stir in parsley.

**Note:**

You can finely chop both vegetables in a food processor fitted with a steel blade—quarter each vegetable, and chop it separately.

## Spaghetti in Meat Sauce

*4 servings as a main course*

*6 servings as an appetizer*

This dish is equally appealing to children and adults. The sauce freezes very well and is good to have on hand.

*3 tablespoons olive oil*  
*1 onion, finely chopped*  
*4 cloves garlic, finely chopped*  
*1 pound chopped meat, half veal and half beef,*  
*finely ground together*  
*1/2 cup dry red wine*  
*14-ounce can peeled Italian tomatoes, not drained*  
*1 cup tightly packed basil leaves, coarsely chopped*  
*1 cup loosely packed Italian parsley, coarsely chopped*  
*Kosher salt*  
*Freshly ground black pepper*  
*1 pound spaghetti*

Heat oil in a medium saucepan until hot, add onion and garlic, and sauté over low heat until tender. Increase heat, add chopped meat and sauté, stirring until meat loses its red color. Add wine, and cook over high heat until almost dry.

*Carrot Loaves*

Add tomatoes and simmer, covered, for about a half-hour.  
Add basil, parsley, and season to taste with salt and pepper.

Meanwhile bring 5 quarts of water to a rolling boil in a large covered pot. Add 2 tablespoons salt and all the pasta at once; stir well. Boil briskly, uncovered, for about 6 minutes, or until the pasta is al dente, tender but still firm to the bite. Pour into a colander and shake vigorously to drain well. Toss with the hot sauce, and season to taste.

## Carrot Loaves

*2 loaves, each serving 12, approximately*

Nutritious and not too sweet, this cake is moist and easy to prepare. It remains fresh for many days if refrigerated, and freezes well.

*1 1/2 cups walnuts*

*About 1 3/4 to 2 pounds carrots (3 cups tightly packed  
grated carrots)*

*3/4 cup vegetable oil, plus some for greasing the pans*

*1 1/2 cups sugar*

*2 cups sifted unbleached flour, plus some for dusting the pans*

*3/4 teaspoon baking powder*

*1/4 teaspoon baking soda*

*4 eggs, at room temperature*

*2 teaspoons ground cinnamon*

Preheat oven to 350°.

Grease two 9 x 5-inch loaf pans. Dust evenly with flour—use Wondra flour if you have it as it coats the pans better. Invert pans and tap to shake off excess flour. Set aside.

Coarsely chop walnuts in a food processor fitted with a steel blade, and set aside.

Coarsely grate carrots in a food processor fitted with a medium grating attachment, and set aside.

In a large bowl stir oil and sugar together, mixing with a wooden spoon for about 2 minutes, or until sugar is thoroughly mixed.

Sift flour with baking powder and baking soda.

Add small amounts of flour mixture and 1 egg at a time to the oil-sugar mixture, mixing well after each addition. Fold in walnuts, carrots and cinnamon.

Divide batter equally between the two prepared pans.

Bake in the center of the oven for 50-55 minutes, making sure that the pans do not touch.

Test with a cake tester in the center of each loaf; it should come out dry. Let loaves cool on a wire rack, and loosen the sides before unmolding. **JA**

**Correction:** The fall 2005 recipes were mistakenly subtitled “Recipes for Rosh Hashanah and Sukkot.” They were fall recipes and not in fact for specific holidays.