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Avgolemono

(Greek Egg & Lemon Soup)

6 servings (1-1/2 cup each)

Whether prepared for lunch or as the first course of a more elaborate dinner, this simple soup is very satisfying. It has all the power of chicken soup, but with greater flair owing to the strong lemon flavors. More traditional interpretations of this soup would feature rice or orzo (rice-shaped pasta). This version uses small pasta stars, pastina, but any small pasta or rice will work. For this soup, the better the stock, the better the result.

8 cups low-sodium, fat-free chicken broth
1/2 cup pastina (or rice, or orzo)
4 eggs
1/4 cup fresh lemon juice
Salt to taste
Freshly ground black pepper to taste
Parsley to garnish

In a 4-quart saucepan, heat the chicken broth to a simmer. Add 1/2 cup of pastina, (or alternatively, 1/2 cup rice, or 1/2 cup orzo). Simmer for 8-10 minutes until the pastina is very tender.

Meanwhile, in a medium, heat-proof bowl, whisk the eggs with the lemon juice until foamy and frothy.

Removing about 1 cup of the hot chicken stock from the saucepan, gradually add it to the egg and lemon mixture while whisking continuously. This will temper the egg mixture and warm it without scrambling the eggs.

Now add the warmed egg and lemon mixture back into the simmering broth while stirring constantly. The soup will thicken as it continues to warm. The soup is ready when it just begins to simmer. (Avoid curdling of the soup by heating it to only to a simmer, not a boil).

Serve hot with a garnish of parsley.