

# Beef Barley Soup With Mushrooms

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## INGREDIENTS:

- ½ ounce dried mushrooms, such as porcini
- 1½ pounds boneless beef stew meat, or boneless piece of whole chuck roast
- 1 large yellow onion, diced
- 2 carrots, peeled and diced
- 3 celery stalks, diced
- Sprig of fresh rosemary or thyme
- 1 bay leaf
- 1 tablespoon salt + salt to taste
- 1¼ cups pearl barley
- ½ pound fresh mushrooms
- Freshly ground pepper to taste

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**INSTRUCTIONS:** Place the dried mushrooms in a 2-cup glass measuring cup and pour in boiling water to cover. Let steep for 20 to 30 minutes.

Strain the mushrooms through a sieve lined with a paper coffee filter or cheesecloth to remove dirt. Remove the mushrooms and squeeze over the sieve to remove excess water; set aside.

Reserve the mushroom-soaking liquid.

Cut the meat into ½-inch cubes and put in a large pot. Add the mushroom-soaking

liquid, onion, carrots, celery, rosemary, bay leaf, 4 quarts of water and 2 teaspoons of the salt. Bring to a simmer, and cook until the meat is fairly tender, about 1½ hours.

As the soup cooks, skim the scum that forms on top.

Add the barley, 2½ cups water and 1 teaspoon salt. Bring to a boil again, then reduce to a simmer and cook for 35 minutes.

Meanwhile, dice the reserved soaked mushrooms, and halve the fresh mushrooms then slice them.

Add the fresh and dried mushrooms to the pot and simmer for 5 to 10 minutes, until the barley is tender. If needed, add a little more water to thin out the soup.

Taste, and add more salt if needed, and pepper.

Serves 10 to 12

**Freezing note:** Let the soup cool completely, then freeze in 5-cup batches (each batch serves 3 or 4). Defrost overnight in the refrigerator then reheat gently and serve.

**PER SERVING:** 190 calories, 14 g protein, 20 g carbohydrate, 6 g fat (2 g saturated), 38 mg cholesterol, 626 mg sodium, 4 g fiber.