CHICKEN SOUP WITH FRESH HERBS (for 10)

Source: STAFFMEALS AT CHANTERELLE (Chef David Waltuck)
Cook/Prep Time: less than 1 hour

INGREDIENTS:

1 bunch fresh dill
1 bunch fresh chervil or 1 TBS chopped fresh tarragon leaves
1 bunch fresh flat-leaf parsley
4 qts chicken stock or canned low-sodium chicken broth
2 whole chickens (about 3 1/2 lbs each), quartered
1 large onion, diced
8 large carrots, peeled/cut into 1" rounds
5 large parsnips, peeled/cut into 1/2" rounds
Coarse salt & freshly ground black pepper, to taste
Homemade Matzoh Balls (see recipe elsewhere) (optional)

DIRECTIONS:

Using butcher's twine, tie dill, chervil & parsley together in 1 big bunch (if using tarragon, sprinkle into stock) - place herb bundle in very large stockpot + stock & chicken pieces - set pot over high heat & bring to boil, skimming off foam as it rises to top. Reduce heat to low, cover & simmer till chicken is just cooked through (about 45 minutes). Test for doneness by piercing a thigh with a fork - juices should run clear. Carefully remove chicken pieces from broth & set aside to cool - remove & discard herb bundle.

Add onion, carrots & parsnips to broth - return to boil - reduce heat to low & simmer till vegetables are very tender (about 30 minutes - a fork should easily pierce through a carrot!) If using matzoh balls, add batter after vegetables have simmered 20 minutes & before chicken is added - matzoh balls should take 15-20 minutes to poach in simmering soup & will bob to surface when done - add chicken after matzoh balls have cooked for 10 minutes - if matzoh balls were cooked separately & are still warm, add to broth 5 minutes after adding chicken - if cool, add at same time as chicken.

While vegetables cook, remove skin from chicken & pull meat from bones - discard skin & bones - coarsely chop meat & add to soup, simmer another 10 minutes to reheat - remove pot from heat - season with salt & freshly ground pepper - serve immediately.