

SLOW COOKER TURKEY AND GREEN CHILE SOUP WITH BARLEY

8-10 servings

Basic warming, filling and healthy dinner at its easiest. Change it up with what's on hand or your favorites with addition/swap-out of other vegetables or citrus. Use all carrots instead of carrots, parsnips, and turnips or just onions instead of the leeks and onions combo mentioned, for instance. Try frozen peas or corn in place of spinach, or grated lemon rind for garnish if cheese isn't on the menu. Not a green chile fan? Simply skip it. Ground beef can also sub for the turkey.

- 2 pounds ground, lean turkey
- 1 large onion, chopped
- 3 leeks, white and light green parts only, sliced thinly
- 2 medium carrots, peeled and sliced into 1/2-inch pieces
- 2 medium parsnips, trimmed and sliced thinly
- 1 small turnip, peeled and diced
- 3 stalks celery, diced
- 5 garlic cloves, minced
- 1/2 cup chopped, roasted mild green chiles (two 4-ounce cans, drained)
- 3/4 cup uncooked pearl barley (not quick-cooking)
- 1 cup dry white wine
- 2 cups water
- 4 cups (32 ounces) chicken broth, low sodium
- 1 14-15-ounce can chopped tomatoes
- 1 1/2 teaspoons kosher salt
- 1 teaspoon freshly ground black pepper
- Pinch crushed red pepper
- 2 teaspoons dried thyme
- 1/2 teaspoon ground sage
- 1/2 teaspoon dried or ground rosemary
- 2 bay leaves
- Handful fresh parsley, chopped
- 1 cup shredded fresh spinach or kale -- **add at end**
- 4-ounces sharp Cheddar cheese, grated -- **for garnish**
- Hot sauce--**pass at the table**

Brown turkey in a heavy skillet until no pink remains. Drain fat, if needed, leaving 2 tablespoons in the pan. Add the leeks and onion to the skillet and cook for 5 minutes, stirring, until softened. Add cooked turkey, leeks and onions, along with the remaining ingredients **except the spinach, cheese, and hot sauce**, (celery - parsley) to a 6-quart slow cooker. Cook on low 6 hours; add fresh spinach and cook another 30-60 minutes or until barley and all of vegetables are totally tender. Taste and adjust seasonings. Serve hot with a sprinkle of Cheddar cheese. A bottle of hot sauce at the table will be appreciated by some.