

## Hearty Barley Soup

By Michelle Stern of [What's Cooking](#)

When the weather outside is frightful, nothing appeals more than a simple, delicious hearty bowl of soup. This recipe is ideal when you are winding down from a long week, and tastes wonderful when served with warm buttered whole-wheat pita bread. To give the barley a richer flavor, toast it in a dry pan over medium heat, shaking occasionally until golden brown. While this recipe calls for ground beef, you could substitute ground turkey or chicken. If you prefer your soup to be on the thick side, omit one cup of water, and you will have a more stew-like consistency. Don't forget to Call The Kids into the kitchen to help you prepare this family meal.

- 2 Tbs oil
- 1 lb ground beef or turkey
- 1 large onion, chopped
- 3 garlic cloves, minced
- 1/2 lb mushrooms, sliced
- 1 (28 ounce) can crushed tomatoes with juice
- 2 (10 1/2 ounce) cans beef or vegetable broth
- 4 cups water
- 1 cup pearly barley
- 1 Tbs brown sugar
- 1 Tbs Worcestershire sauce
- 1 Tbs vinegar, cider or white
- 1 (16 ounce) bag frozen mixed vegetables
- salt and pepper

1. If you are going to toast the barley, do this step first and then remove and set aside.
2. Brown ground meat in oil in a heavy bottom soup pot on medium high heat. Cook until no longer pink, and then pour off any grease that is in the pan.
3. Add onions and sauté until they are translucent, stir in garlic and mushrooms and cook 1 minute more.
4. Stir in tomatoes and their juice, broth, 4 cups of water, barley, brown sugar, Worcestershire sauce, and vinegar.
5. Bring to a boil, reduce heat cover and simmer 30 minutes.
6. Add salt, pepper and mixed vegetables and cook 10 minutes more.

**Servings:** 12 (Great for leftovers and school lunches!)

### Call the Kids

- Peel the garlic
- Wash mushrooms with a damp cloth, take off stems
- Help open cans
- Measure brown sugar, and sauces
- Help pour ingredients in to the pot

**Nutrition** (per serving): 199.7 calories; 50% calories from fat; 11.0g total fat; 28.8mg cholesterol; 371.4mg sodium; 375.6mg potassium; 16.2g carbohydrates; 2.7g fiber; 2.8g sugar; 13.5g net carbs; 9.7g protein.

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