

Mushroom-Barley Soup

Serves 4

- 30 g dried porcini mushrooms (about 1 C)
- 2 T olive oil
- 115 g shiitake or button mushrooms, stemmed and roughly chopped
- 3 medium carrots, peeled and sliced
- 200 g Japanese pearl barley
- Salt and pepper
- 1 bay leaf
- Sprig fresh thyme
- 1 T soy sauce
- 720 ml beef stock



- Soak **porcini** in 3 C very hot water with a splash of **cognac**.
- Put **olive oil** in a medium saucepan and turn **heat to medium high**.
- Add **shiitake** and **carrots**, and cook, stirring occasionally, until they begin to brown.
- Add **barley**, and continue to cook, stirring frequently, until it begins to brown; sprinkle with a little **salt** and **pepper**.
- Remove the porcini from their soaking liquid, and reserve liquid. Sort through porcini and discard any hard bits.
- Add porcini to pot and cook, stirring, for **about a minute**.
- Add **bay leaf**, **thyme**, **mushroom** soaking water and **beef stock**. Bring to a boil, then lower the heat to a **simmer**; cook until barley is very tender, **20 to 30 minutes**.
- Add **soy sauce**, and taste. Add **salt** if necessary and plenty of **pepper**. Serve hot.

**Or, cook barley separately and then add*