



## Barley with Crunchy Chickpeas & Almonds Topped with Balsamic Vinegar

*Orzotto Zucca Ceci Aceto Balsamico*

### Ingredients

#### For the barley (orzotto):

- 240g (~8.5 oz) pearl barley
- 1 medium round/flat "delica" pumpkin
- 550g (~1.2 pounds) of shelled and peeled almonds
- 5 tbs extra virgin olive oil
- 2 sprigs of fresh thyme
- 1 lime (zest and juice)
- 1 tsp of sweet paprika
- vegetable stock
- balsamic vinegar
- iodized fine salt

#### For the crispy chickpeas:

- 1 can of chickpeas
- 1/2 tsp garam masala or strong curry
- pinch of chili pepper
- 1 bunch of chopped fresh herbs (rosemary, mint, basil work well)
- iodized fine salt
- extra virgin olive oil or oil suitable for frying



Servings: 4

# Directions

Prepare the vegetable stock:

Use either pre-made vegetable stock or home-made stock. If making your own vegetable stock, boil in cold water: 1 celery stalk, 1 carrot, 1 onion, 2 bay leaves and 2 garlic cloves. Strain the liquid to remove the vegetables before adding to recipe.

Prepare the pumpkin:

Empty the pumpkin of its flesh without breaking it, keeping the pumpkin whole and the top intact so you can use the top as a lid. This will be your serving dish!

Bake the pumpkin flesh in pieces for 30 minutes at 350 F° or until soft. Once the flesh has cooled, blend most of it in a blender to puree. (Save some to cut into cubes to use as a garnish.)

Prepare the chickpeas:

Rinse the chickpeas, then marinate for a few minutes in a bowl with the spices and fresh herbs and a couple of tablespoons of extra virgin olive oil. Fry the chickpeas until crispy. Drain them, dry them with a towel, and keep them warm.

Prepare the almonds:

Toss the almonds with a pinch of salt. Toast them for 5-7 minutes in a 350 F° oven or warm them in a pan over low-medium heat until lightly toasted. Once toasted, chop the almonds coarsely.

Prepare the barley:

Toast the barley in a pan on the stovetop over low-medium heat, and continue cooking, adding a ladle of vegetable broth from time to time. About halfway through cooking, add the pumpkin puree. At the end of cooking, stir in some oil, the juice of a lime, and a few drops of balsamic vinegar. Add some of the almonds and chickpeas to the mix but save some of each for a garnish.

Assemble the dish:

Pour the barley mixture into the whole empty pumpkin, garnishing with almonds, fried chickpeas, cubes of baked pumpkin, a few drops of balsamic vinegar, fresh thyme, and lime zest.