

# Toasted Bulghur with Poached Chicken

*or Chicken and Smeed*

a recipe from [www.maureenabood.com](http://www.maureenabood.com)

This recipe calls for coarse cracked wheat (also known as bulghur or *smeed*), which is #3 grade. Finer grade, #1, is used for tabbouleh and kibbe. The key to this dish is not to overcook the chicken, or over-toast the cracked wheat. Adjust quantities easily by altering the amount of cracked wheat as you would rice; the ratio is 2:1, broth to wheat. Use high-quality chicken if you can—that means it's farmed on a small scale, ideally not too far from where you live. Mine came from Fleming Feirms in Bliss (yes) Michigan. This pastured chicken is sold at Toski Sands, a little local grocery store up north here that packs a big punch (a small sign near the cash register reads: *Italian truffles available. Order yours today.*).

2 chicken breasts, bone-in and skin-on

2 cups coarse cracked wheat (#3)--bulghur (*smeed*)

2 tablespoons butter

1 teaspoon salt

¼ teaspoon freshly ground black pepper

1 cinnamon stick, or ¼ teaspoon of ground cinnamon

In a large saucepan, cover the chicken by 1 inch with cold water. Bring to a boil over medium-high heat. Skim off any scum, and reduce heat to medium low. Poach the chicken for 20 minutes, skimming as needed.

Remove chicken from broth and reserve 4 cups of broth for making the cracked wheat. When chicken has cooled enough to handle, tear off bite-size pieces. Discard skin and bone. Don't worry if the chicken is not fully cooked; it's going to poach further with the cracked wheat.

Add butter to the empty saucepan and melt over medium heat. Butter should foam up as it gets hot. Add the cracked wheat and stir, coating with the butter. Stir constantly until the wheat turns golden brown. Do not take the wheat to deep golden brown, or it will taste bitter.

Add the chicken, 4 cups of broth, salt, pepper, and cinnamon stick or ground cinnamon. Stir, cover and bring to a boil. Reduce heat and simmer until all of the broth is absorbed, about 20 minutes. Taste and adjust seasoning. Remove cinnamon stick and serve immediately with a romaine salad dressed with lemon and oil, thin pita bread, and labne.