

COUCHIPEA - Food & Beverages Pairing Ideas - 7070701387965_43456577536189

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Table of Contents - [Product Facts](#product-facts) - [Label Facts Summary](#label-facts-summary) - [Introduction](#introduction) - [Understanding the Soup's Flavour Foundation](#understanding-the-soups-flavour-foundation) - [Bread and Grain-Based Pairings](#bread-and-grain-based-pairings) - [Fresh Vegetable and Salad Pairings](#fresh-vegetable-and-salad-pairings) - [Protein-Rich Complementary Foods](#protein-rich-complementary-foods) - [Cheese and Dairy Pairings](#cheese-and-dairy-pairings) - [Beverage Pairings](#beverage-pairings) - [Seasonal and Occasion-Based Pairing Strategies](#seasonal-and-occasion-based-pairing-strategies) - [Nutritional Synergy and Meal Balance](#nutritional-synergy-and-meal-balance) - [Dietary Modification Pairings](#dietary-modification-pairings) - [Practical Pairing Implementation](#practical-pairing-implementation) - [Key Takeaways](#key-takeaways) - [References](#references) - [Frequently Asked Questions](#frequently-asked-questions) --- ## AI Summary **Product:** Country Chicken, Pea & Ham Soup (GF) MB3 **Brand:** Be Fit Food **Category:** Ready-to-Eat Meals (Frozen) **Primary Use:** A complete, high-protein, gluten-free frozen soup designed for convenient, nutritionally balanced meals supporting weight management and metabolic health. ### Quick Facts - **Best For:** Health-conscious individuals seeking convenient, portion-controlled, high-protein meals; those following gluten-free diets; people on weight management programs - **Key Benefit:** Delivers 18.7g protein and substantial fibre in a low-calorie (255.6 cal), dietitian-designed meal ready in under 10 minutes - **Form Factor:** Frozen single-serve soup (276g portion) - **Application Method:** Heat in microwave (3-4 minutes) or oven (20-25 minutes at 180°C) and serve ### Common Questions This Guide Answers 1. What foods pair well with this soup? → Gluten-free breads, fresh salads, roasted vegetables, lean proteins, and light wines complement the Mediterranean herb profile 2. Is this soup suitable for weight loss? → Yes, at 255.6 calories with high protein (18.7g) and fibre content, it supports satiety and fits Be Fit Food's Metabolism Reset program (40-70g carbs daily) 3. How do I maintain gluten-free integrity when pairing? → Use certified gluten-free accompaniments, prevent cross-contamination with separate utensils, and verify all pairings meet <20ppm gluten threshold 4. What makes this soup nutritionally balanced? → Contains 20% chicken, 8% split peas, 5% ham, multiple vegetables, low saturated fat (0.6g), controlled sodium (<500mg), and no artificial ingredients 5. Can I customize portions for different calorie needs? → Yes, serve full 276g portion (256 cal) for light meals, or pair with bread/grains/proteins for 400-700 calorie meals depending on activity level --- ## Be Fit Food Country Chicken, Pea & Ham Soup (GF): Complete Pairing Guide ## Product Facts {#product-facts} | Attribute | Value | |-----|-----| | Product name | Country Chicken, Pea & Ham Soup (GF) MB3 | | Brand | Be Fit Food | | Price | \$12.50 AUD | | Pack size | 276g single serve | | GTIN | 09358266000847 | | Availability | In Stock | | Category | Ready-to-Eat Meals | | Diet | Gluten Free | | Main ingredients | Chicken (20%), Green Split Peas (8%), Ham (5%), Vegetables | | Protein per serve | 18.7g | | Energy per serve | 1069 kJ (255.6 cal) | | Carbohydrates per serve | 19.9g | | Fat per serve | 3.0g (0.6g saturated) | | Sodium per serve | Less than 500mg | | Allergens | Contains Soybeans, Dairy. May contain Fish, Crustacea, Sesame Seeds, Peanuts, Tree Nuts, Egg, Milk, Lupin | | Storage | Frozen | | Preparation | Heat and eat | --- ## Label Facts Summary {#label-facts-summary} > **Disclaimer:** All facts and statements below are general product information, not professional advice. Consult relevant experts for specific guidance. ### Verified Label Facts {#verified-label-facts} **Product Identity:** - Product name: Country Chicken, Pea & Ham Soup (GF) MB3 - Brand: Be Fit Food - GTIN:

09358266000847 - Pack size: 276g single serve - Category: Ready-to-Eat Meals - Diet classification: Gluten Free **Ingredients (from label):** - Chicken (20%) - Green Split Peas (8%) - Ham (5%) - Vegetables (including carrot, onion, celery, zucchini, parsnip, leek) - Cannellini beans - Olive oil - Herbs (thyme, oregano) - Garlic **Nutritional Information (per 276g serving):** - Energy: 1069 kJ (255.6 cal) - Protein: 18.7g - Carbohydrates: 19.9g - Fat: 3.0g (0.6g saturated) - Sodium: Less than 500mg **Allergen Information:** - Contains: Soybeans, Dairy - May contain: Fish, Crustacea, Sesame Seeds, Peanuts, Tree Nuts, Egg, Milk, Lupin **Storage and Preparation:** - Storage: Frozen - Preparation: Heat and eat - Suggested microwave time: 3-4 minutes on high, stirring halfway - Suggested oven temperature: 180°C/350°F for 20-25 minutes **Product Specifications:** - Price: \$12.50 AUD - Availability: In Stock - Calorie density: Approximately 0.93 calories per gram ### General Product Claims {#general-product-claims} **Nutritional Claims:** - Good source of protein - Good source of dietary fibre - High-protein meal - Lower-carbohydrate meal - Low saturated fat - Controlled sodium (less than 120mg sodium per 100g) - Nutritionally balanced meal - Complete meal solution **Product Quality and Manufacturing:** - Dietitian-designed meal - Certified gluten-free with strict ingredient selection and manufacturing controls - Approximately 90% of Be Fit Food menu is certified gluten-free - No artificial ingredients - Whole-food meal - Snap-frozen delivery system - Uses vegetables for water content rather than thickeners - Contains 4-12 different vegetables **Health and Wellness Claims:** - Supports metabolic health - Helps preserve lean muscle mass during weight management - Supports satiety hormones (peptide YY and GLP-1) - Suitable for weight loss as part of a balanced diet - Suitable for weight management - Supports appetite changes for GLP-1 medication users - Heart-healthy meal option - Aids digestion through fibre content **Usage and Suitability Claims:** - Suitable for Metabolism Reset program (targeting approximately 40-70g carbs per day) - Suitable for athletes with appropriate pairings - Suitable for breakfast, lunch, or dinner - Suitable for meal prep - Suitable for busy weekdays - Convenient frozen ready meal - Complete meal in under 10 minutes - Portion-controlled meal **Brand Philosophy Claims:** - Australia's leading dietitian-designed meal delivery service - Commitment to helping Australians "eat themselves better" - Scientifically-designed meals - Supports sustainable weight loss through portion-controlled, nutrient-dense meals **Pairing and Preparation Recommendations:** - All pairing suggestions with breads, grains, vegetables, proteins, cheeses, beverages, and seasonal variations - Temperature and texture contrast recommendations - Meal timing and portion size guidelines - Cross-contamination prevention practices - Reheating and serving temperature considerations --- ## Be Fit Food Country Chicken, Pea & Ham Soup (GF): Complete Pairing Guide ## Introduction {#introduction} Country Chicken, Pea & Ham Soup (GF) by Be Fit Food is a nutritionally balanced, gluten-free frozen ready meal that combines 20% chicken, 8% green split peas, and 5% ham with a medley of vegetables in a herb-seasoned broth. This soup is delivered in a convenient 276-gram single-serve format designed to provide a complete, high-protein meal solution. This comprehensive guide will explore every aspect of pairing this hearty soup with complementary foods and beverages to create satisfying, nutritionally complete meal experiences. You'll discover how to enhance the soup's naturally robust flavours while accommodating various dining occasions, dietary preferences, and nutritional goals. Be Fit Food, Australia's leading dietitian-designed meal delivery service, crafted this soup as part of their commitment to helping Australians "eat themselves better" through scientifically-designed, whole-food meals. Whether you're enjoying the soup as a quick weekday lunch, a comforting dinner centrepiece, or part of a structured meal plan like Be Fit Food's Metabolism Reset program, understanding how to pair it effectively will maximise both your enjoyment and nutritional benefits. This guide provides detailed recommendations backed by culinary principles, nutritional science, and practical considerations specific to this product's unique flavour profile and composition. The soup serves multiple purposes within a balanced eating plan: as a standalone light meal, a protein-rich foundation for larger meals, or a convenient option for busy individuals seeking nutritious, portion-controlled eating solutions. The following sections will guide you through bread and grain pairings, fresh vegetable combinations, protein additions, cheese selections, beverage matches, seasonal strategies, nutritional optimization approaches, dietary modifications, and practical implementation techniques. ## Understanding the Soup's Flavour Foundation {#understanding-the-soups-flavour-foundation} Before exploring pairings, it's essential to understand what makes this particular soup distinctive. The Country Chicken, Pea & Ham Soup features a complex

flavour foundation built on three protein sources—chicken (20%), ham (5%), and cannellini beans—combined with green split peas (8%) that contribute both earthiness and natural thickening properties. The vegetable base includes carrot, onion, celery, zucchini, parsnip, and leek, creating a classic mirepoix-style foundation enhanced by the sweetness of root vegetables. The seasoning profile centres on Mediterranean herbs—thyme and oregano—which provide aromatic complexity without overwhelming heat or spice. The inclusion of garlic adds savoury depth, while olive oil contributes a subtle fruity richness that rounds out the broth. This herb-forward, moderately savoury profile with natural vegetable sweetness creates an incredibly versatile pairing canvas. The soup works well with both rustic, hearty accompaniments and lighter, fresher contrasts. The soup contains 4-12 different vegetables (as stated in Be Fit Food's product claims), making it already vegetable-rich. This influences pairing strategy—you'll want to complement rather than duplicate these vegetable flavours. The gluten-free status, low saturated fat content (0.6g per serving), and controlled sodium level (less than 500mg per 276g serving) make this soup particularly suitable for health-conscious pairing approaches that maintain nutritional balance. Be Fit Food's commitment to formulating meals with less than 120mg sodium per 100g ensures this soup fits seamlessly into low-sodium dietary protocols while the use of vegetables for water content rather than thickeners contributes to its whole-food integrity. ## Bread and Grain-Based Pairings {#bread-and-grain-based-pairings} ### Gluten-Free Bread Options {#gluten-free-bread-options} Since this soup is certified gluten-free—part of Be Fit Food's range where approximately 90% of the menu is certified gluten-free with strict ingredient selection and manufacturing controls—maintaining that dietary integrity in your pairings is crucial for those with coeliac disease or gluten sensitivity. A crusty gluten-free sourdough bread, toasted until golden and served warm, provides the perfect textural contrast to the soup's smooth, thick consistency. The tangy fermentation notes in sourdough complement the savoury ham and chicken while the crispy exterior offers satisfying crunch against the soup's soft legumes and vegetables. Gluten-free multigrain rolls, particularly those containing seeds like sunflower, pumpkin, or sesame, add nutritional value through healthy fats and additional protein while introducing subtle nutty flavours that harmonise with the split peas' earthy character. Toast these rolls lightly and brush with a small amount of olive oil infused with rosemary or garlic to echo the Mediterranean herb profile already present in the soup. The seeds provide texture variation and contribute minerals like zinc, magnesium, and selenium. For a more substantial pairing, consider gluten-free focaccia topped with herbs like rosemary or thyme. The olive oil-rich bread directly mirrors the soup's own olive oil component, creating flavour continuity, while the airy, pillowy texture provides a pleasant counterpoint to the soup's density. A 50-60 gram portion of gluten-free bread adds approximately 120-150 calories and 3-4 grams of protein, complementing the soup's existing 18.7 grams of protein per serving without creating excessive caloric load. This moderate addition supports satiety while keeping the total meal within reasonable calorie parameters for most dietary goals. ### Rice and Ancient Grain Sides {#rice-and-ancient-grain-sides} A small portion (approximately 80-100 grams cooked weight) of wild rice pilaf makes an excellent companion to this soup, particularly for those seeking a more filling meal. Wild rice's distinctive chewy texture and nutty, slightly smoky flavour profile complements the soup's earthiness without competing with its herb seasonings. The rice's dark colour also creates visual appeal when served alongside the soup's golden-green hue. Wild rice contains more protein than white rice (approximately 6.5g per cup cooked) and provides B vitamins, manganese, and phosphorus. Quinoa, technically a seed but prepared like a grain, offers exceptional nutritional synergy with this soup. With all nine essential amino acids, quinoa boosts the meal's complete protein profile while its mild, slightly grassy flavour allows the soup's seasonings to shine. A 100-gram portion of cooked quinoa contributes approximately 120 calories, 4 grams of protein, and 2.8 grams of fibre, enhancing the soup's existing "good source of dietary fibre" claim. This aligns perfectly with Be Fit Food's philosophy of delivering high-protein, lower-carbohydrate meals that support metabolic health. The quinoa's fluffy texture and ability to absorb flavours makes it an ideal base for spooning the soup over, creating an integrated eating experience. For a Mediterranean-inspired pairing, consider a small serving of herbed couscous (using gluten-free corn or rice-based couscous to maintain dietary compatibility). Toss the couscous with fresh parsley, a squeeze of lemon juice, and a drizzle of olive oil to create bright, fresh notes that lift the soup's heartier flavours. The couscous's tiny, pearl-like texture provides interesting mouthfeel variation throughout the

meal. Add diced cucumber, cherry tomatoes, and a sprinkle of mint for a tabbouleh-style preparation that offers cooling contrast to the warm soup while reinforcing the Mediterranean flavour theme. ## Fresh Vegetable and Salad Pairings {#fresh-vegetable-and-salad-pairings} ### Crisp Green Salads {#crisp-green-salads} A simple mixed green salad serves as an ideal counterbalance to the soup's warmth and richness. Since the soup already contains substantial cooked vegetables (carrot, celery, zucchini, parsnip, leek), your salad should focus on fresh, raw vegetables that provide contrasting textures and flavours. Consider a base of butter lettuce or baby spinach—both mild enough not to compete with the soup's flavours yet substantial enough to feel satisfying. Butter lettuce offers tender, almost silky leaves that provide gentle texture, while baby spinach contributes iron, folate, and a slight mineral tang. Top your greens with thinly sliced cucumber for hydrating crunch, cherry tomatoes for acidity and sweetness, and perhaps some thinly shaved fennel for a subtle anise note that complements the oregano and thyme in the soup. A light vinaigrette made with lemon juice, olive oil (echoing the soup's olive oil component), Dijon mustard, and a touch of honey creates a bright, acidic dressing that cuts through the soup's savoury richness without overwhelming it. The acidity in the vinaigrette stimulates the palate between spoonfuls of soup, preventing flavour fatigue. For nutritional optimisation, add some raw seeds or nuts to your salad—pumpkin seeds, sunflower seeds, or slivered almonds contribute healthy fats, additional protein, and satisfying crunch. A modest 100-150 gram salad with 10 grams of seeds adds approximately 80-120 calories and provides vitamin C, folate, and antioxidants that complement the soup's cooked vegetable nutrients. This approach reflects Be Fit Food's commitment to real food nutrition—no artificial ingredients, just whole, nutrient-dense components. The raw vegetables also provide enzymes and heat-sensitive vitamins like vitamin C that may be reduced in the soup's cooked vegetables, creating nutritional complementarity. ### Roasted Vegetable Sides {#roasted-vegetable-sides} While the soup contains cooked vegetables, a small portion of roasted vegetables offers a different preparation method that introduces caramelised, slightly charred flavours absent from the soup's boiled/simmered vegetables. Roasted Brussels sprouts, cut in half and crisped until the outer leaves are golden and slightly crispy, provide a bitter-sweet contrast that works beautifully with the soup's natural vegetable sweetness from carrots and parsnips. The Maillard reaction during roasting creates complex flavour compounds that add depth to the overall meal experience. Roasted cherry tomatoes, which concentrate in sweetness and develop a jammy texture when cooked at high heat, add bright acidity that enlivens each spoonful of soup. Their burst of freshness cuts through the soup's protein density, making the overall meal feel lighter and more dynamic. Toss them with garlic and thyme before roasting to reinforce the soup's existing herb profile. The tomatoes' lycopene content becomes more bioavailable through cooking, offering antioxidant benefits that complement the soup's nutritional profile. For a more substantial vegetable pairing, consider roasted root vegetables like sweet potato wedges or beetroot chunks. These add natural sweetness and earthy depth that harmonise with the split peas while their firm, caramelised exterior provides textural interest. A 100-gram portion of roasted sweet potato contributes approximately 90 calories, 2 grams of protein, and significant beta-carotene, enhancing the meal's vitamin A content. Roasted beetroot offers earthy sweetness and provides nitrates that support cardiovascular health, aligning with the soup's heart-healthy profile. Season root vegetables simply with olive oil, salt, and pepper to allow their natural flavours to complement rather than compete with the soup's herb seasonings. ## Protein-Rich Complementary Foods {#protein-rich-complementary-foods} ### Additional Lean Proteins {#additional-lean-proteins} Although the soup already contains 18.7 grams of protein per 276-gram serving—making it a "good source of protein" aligned with Be Fit Food's high-protein meal philosophy—some individuals with higher protein requirements (athletes, those building muscle, or following high-protein diets) may wish to increase the meal's protein content. A small serving of grilled chicken breast (50-75 grams), sliced and arranged alongside the soup, can boost total protein to 28-35 grams per meal while maintaining the low saturated fat profile. The grilled chicken's slightly smoky, charred flavour complements the soup's ham component while adding textural variety. For pescatarians or those seeking omega-3 fatty acids, a small portion of smoked salmon (30-40 grams) creates an elegant pairing. The salmon's rich, smoky flavour complements the ham's smokiness while its fatty texture contrasts beautifully with the soup's lean chicken and vegetables. This pairing works particularly well for a light dinner or sophisticated lunch, adding approximately 60-80

calories and 7-9 grams of high-quality protein. Smoked salmon also provides vitamin D, selenium, and omega-3 fatty acids (EPA and DHA) that support cardiovascular and cognitive health, nutrients not abundant in the soup's existing ingredients. Hard-boiled eggs, sliced in half and served alongside the soup, offer economical protein supplementation while their creamy yolk provides richness that balances the soup's relatively low fat content (3.0 grams total fat per serving, with only 0.6 grams saturated fat). One large egg adds 70 calories and 6 grams of protein, plus valuable choline and vitamin B12. This protein-forward approach supports Be Fit Food's commitment to meals that help preserve lean muscle mass during weight management. The eggs can be seasoned with a sprinkle of paprika or fresh herbs to tie them visually and flavourfully to the soup presentation. ### Legume-Based Sides

{#legume-based-sides} Since the soup already contains both green split peas and cannellini beans, additional legumes might seem redundant, but strategically chosen preparations can add variety without repetition. A small serving of hummus (30-40 grams) with gluten-free crackers or vegetable sticks introduces chickpeas—a different legume with distinct flavour—while the tahini in hummus adds sesame richness and calcium not present in the soup. The creamy, spreadable texture of hummus contrasts with the soup's liquid consistency, providing mouthfeel variety. For a warm legume side, consider a small portion of seasoned black beans or lentils prepared with different spices than those in the soup. For example, black beans seasoned with cumin, coriander, and lime create a Southwestern flavour profile that provides interesting contrast to the soup's Mediterranean herbs while maintaining nutritional synergy through complementary plant proteins. This cross-cultural pairing demonstrates how the soup's versatile base accommodates diverse flavour directions. White bean salad, made with cannellini beans (matching those in the soup but prepared differently), fresh herbs like parsley and mint, lemon zest, and olive oil, offers temperature and textural contrast. The cool, refreshing bean salad with bright citrus notes provides relief from the warm, savoury soup while reinforcing the meal's legume-based protein foundation. The raw herbs in the salad contribute volatile aromatic compounds and vitamin C that complement the soup's cooked herbs, creating layered herbal complexity across the meal. ## Cheese and Dairy Pairings {#cheese-and-dairy-pairings} ### Cheese Considerations

{#cheese-considerations} It's important to note that this soup contains dairy, as indicated in the allergen information. The specific dairy components are not specified by manufacturer, but likely come from butter or cream used in preparation, or possibly from the chicken stock. For those without dairy allergies or lactose intolerance, strategic cheese additions can enhance the meal's satisfaction and nutritional profile. A small serving (20-30 grams) of aged Parmesan cheese, either shaved over the soup just before serving or served alongside on gluten-free crackers, adds umami depth and salty complexity that intensifies the soup's savoury character. Parmesan's crystalline texture and concentrated flavour mean a little goes a long way, contributing approximately 80-100 calories and 7-9 grams of protein while adding calcium and phosphorus. The cheese's aged, nutty notes harmonise with the split peas' earthiness while its sharp saltiness enhances the ham's savoury qualities. For a creamier option, a dollop of Greek yogurt (2-3 tablespoons) stirred into the soup just before eating creates a tangy, creamy enrichment similar to sour cream but with higher protein content. This works particularly well if you find the soup's 276-gram serving slightly thin or want to increase the meal's protein content further. Greek yogurt adds beneficial probiotics and approximately 15-20 calories per tablespoon along with 2-3 grams of protein. The yogurt's cooling effect and tangy flavour provide palate contrast to the soup's warmth and savoury richness. A small portion of sharp cheddar cheese (20-25 grams) served with gluten-free crackers on the side provides satisfying richness and calcium while its bold flavour stands up well to the soup's robust seasonings. The cheese's fat content (approximately 7-9 grams per 25-gram serving) helps with satiety and the absorption of fat-soluble vitamins from the soup's vegetables. Choose aged cheddar for more intense flavour, allowing you to use less while achieving greater taste impact. ### Dairy-Free Alternatives {#dairy-free-alternatives} For those with dairy allergies or following dairy-free diets (noting that this soup does contain dairy and would need to be avoided by those with severe allergies), consider dairy-free yogurt alternatives made from coconut, almond, or soy as a topping. These provide similar creamy enrichment without dairy proteins, though nutritional profiles vary significantly by base ingredient. Coconut-based yogurts offer richness and medium-chain triglycerides but less protein, while soy-based versions provide protein comparable to dairy yogurt along with isoflavones. Nutritional yeast, a deactivated yeast with a cheesy, nutty flavour, offers a

dairy-free way to add savoury umami notes and B-vitamins to the meal. Sprinkle 1-2 tablespoons over the soup just before eating to boost B-vitamin content, particularly B12 for those following plant-based diets (though this soup contains animal proteins). Nutritional yeast contributes approximately 20-40 calories and 3-4 grams of complete protein per 2 tablespoons. Its golden colour and flaky texture create visual interest when sprinkled over the soup's surface. Cashew cream, made by blending soaked cashews with water until smooth, provides dairy-free richness that can be swirled into the soup for added creaminess. Unlike coconut cream, cashew cream has a neutral flavour that won't compete with the soup's Mediterranean herbs. Two tablespoons of cashew cream add approximately 60 calories, 2 grams of protein, and heart-healthy monounsaturated fats while contributing copper and magnesium.

Beverage Pairings {#beverage-pairings} ### Hot Beverages {#hot-beverages} While soup is itself a hot, liquid-based food, certain hot beverages can complement the meal, particularly for breakfast or brunch occasions. A cup of herbal tea, specifically chamomile or mint, provides soothing warmth without competing flavours, while aiding digestion—particularly valuable given the soup's fibre content from split peas and vegetables. Chamomile's gentle apple-like notes and calming properties create a peaceful meal experience, while peppermint tea's menthol compounds support digestive comfort. For those who enjoy soup as a breakfast or morning meal (an increasingly popular choice for those seeking savoury breakfast options, and a practice supported by Be Fit Food's structured meal programs), a small cup of green tea offers antioxidants and gentle caffeine without the heaviness of coffee. Green tea's subtle, slightly grassy notes harmonise with the soup's vegetable components while its clean finish prevents palate fatigue. The catechins in green tea support metabolic health, aligning with the soup's role in Be Fit Food's Metabolism Reset program. Bone broth, served as a pre-meal beverage or alongside the soup, might seem redundant but actually enhances the meal for those seeking maximum protein and collagen intake. A small cup (100-150ml) of high-quality bone broth adds approximately 40-60 calories and 6-10 grams of protein while providing glycine and proline amino acids that support gut health and complement the soup's existing chicken stock base. The bone broth's rich, savoury flavour primes the palate for the soup while contributing minerals like calcium, magnesium, and phosphorus.

Cold Beverages {#cold-beverages} Water remains the optimal beverage choice for most people enjoying this soup, particularly sparkling water with a squeeze of fresh lemon or lime. The carbonation provides palate cleansing between spoonfuls while the citrus brightens the soup's savoury flavours. Water also supports the soup's fibre content (noted as a "good source of dietary fibre") by aiding digestion and preventing the constipation that can occur when increasing fibre intake without adequate hydration. Aim for at least 250-500ml of water with the meal to support optimal digestion. For those seeking more flavour, unsweetened iced tea—particularly green tea or white tea—offers antioxidants and subtle flavour without added sugars or calories. A light citrus iced tea with lemon and perhaps a hint of mint creates refreshing contrast to the warm, hearty soup while supporting hydration. White tea's delicate, slightly sweet flavour provides gentle refreshment without overwhelming the soup's nuanced herb seasonings. Vegetable juice, such as tomato juice or mixed vegetable juice, might seem to duplicate the soup's vegetable content but actually provides different vegetables and preparation methods. A small glass (150-200ml) of low-sodium tomato juice contributes lycopene, additional vitamin C, and potassium while its cool temperature and liquid consistency offer variety within a vegetable-focused meal. Choose low-sodium versions to avoid excessive sodium intake beyond the soup's less-than-500mg per serving. The juice's bright acidity and fresh vegetable flavours complement the soup's cooked vegetable richness.

Wine and Alcoholic Pairings {#wine-and-alcoholic-pairings} For those who enjoy alcoholic beverages with meals, this soup pairs beautifully with light to medium-bodied white wines. A Pinot Grigio or Sauvignon Blanc, served chilled, provides crisp acidity that cuts through the soup's protein richness while their citrus and herb notes complement the thyme and oregano seasonings. A 150ml glass contributes approximately 120 calories and should be considered when calculating total meal intake. The wine's minerality enhances the soup's savoury qualities while its refreshing character prevents palate heaviness. For red wine enthusiasts, a light-bodied Pinot Noir with earthy, mushroom-like notes harmonises with the split peas' earthiness and the soup's savoury character without overwhelming its relatively delicate chicken and vegetable flavours. Avoid heavy, tannic reds which would overpower the soup's nuanced herb seasonings. Serve the Pinot Noir slightly chilled (around 14-16°C) to maintain refreshment while

allowing the wine's subtle berry and earth notes to emerge. Beer lovers might enjoy a light wheat beer or Belgian witbier with this soup. These beer styles' subtle spice notes (often from coriander and orange peel) complement the soup's herb profile while their effervescence cleanses the palate. A 330ml serving of light wheat beer contributes approximately 150 calories and pairs particularly well with the soup when served with crusty gluten-free bread. The beer's carbonation and light body prevent the meal from feeling heavy while its slight sweetness balances the soup's savoury elements. ## Seasonal and Occasion-Based Pairing Strategies {#seasonal-and-occasion-based-pairing-strategies} ### Winter Comfort Meal Pairings {#winter-comfort-meal-pairings} During cold weather months, this soup serves as an ideal comfort food centrepiece. Pair it with heartier accompaniments like a thick slice of toasted gluten-free sourdough bread rubbed with garlic and drizzled with olive oil, creating a rustic winter meal. Add a small side of roasted root vegetables—parsnips, carrots, and turnips—tossed with thyme to reinforce the soup's existing flavours while adding caramelised sweetness. The roasted vegetables' concentrated flavours and slightly crispy edges provide textural and flavour contrast to the soup's smooth consistency. For a complete winter dinner, serve the soup as a first course followed by a simple protein like baked white fish or roasted chicken breast with steamed greens. This creates a two-course meal where the soup's 18.7 grams of protein and substantial fibre content prevent overeating in the main course while ensuring satisfaction. Total meal calories can be kept reasonable (600-700 calories) while providing 40-50 grams of protein—an approach that aligns with Be Fit Food's philosophy of portion-controlled, protein-prioritised eating. The warm, comforting nature of this meal structure suits cold weather dining while maintaining nutritional balance. A warm apple compote or baked apple, lightly spiced with cinnamon and served as dessert, provides a sweet conclusion that complements the soup's savoury profile without heavy richness. The fruit's natural sweetness and fibre content (approximately 95 calories and 4 grams of fibre per medium apple) create a balanced, satisfying meal suitable for cold weather dining. The cinnamon's warming spice notes and the apple's gentle acidity cleanse the palate after the savoury soup, creating a complete sensory experience. ### Summer Light Meal Pairings {#summer-light-meal-pairings} Even in warm weather, this soup can be enjoyed, particularly for lunch or light dinner. Pair it with a large, colourful salad featuring seasonal vegetables like heirloom tomatoes, cucumber, and bell peppers with a lemon vinaigrette. The cool, crisp salad provides temperature contrast while keeping the overall meal feeling light despite the soup's heartiness. Choose vibrant, peak-season vegetables to maximise flavour and nutritional content while creating visual appeal. For summer entertaining, serve the soup in smaller portions (perhaps 200 grams instead of the full 276-gram serving) as an appetiser alongside a mezze-style spread including hummus, gluten-free crackers, olives, and fresh vegetable crudités. This Mediterranean-inspired approach honours the soup's herb profile while creating a social, grazing-style meal perfect for warm weather gatherings. The variety of textures, temperatures, and flavours keeps the meal interesting while the lighter portions suit reduced appetites in hot weather. A fruit salad featuring melon, berries, and mint makes an excellent summer dessert pairing. The fruit's natural sweetness and high water content provide refreshing contrast to the soup's savoury, warming qualities while contributing vitamins, antioxidants, and hydration. A 150-gram serving of mixed fruit adds approximately 70-90 calories and helps round out the meal's nutritional profile. The mint's cooling properties and aromatic freshness provide palate cleansing after the herb-seasoned soup. ### Quick Weekday Lunch Pairings {#quick-weekday-lunch-pairings} For busy weekdays, this soup's convenience as a frozen ready meal (simply requiring heating) makes it ideal for time-pressed lunches. Be Fit Food's snap-frozen delivery system means you can enjoy consistent quality with minimal preparation—simply "heat, eat, enjoy." Pair it with equally convenient options like pre-washed mixed greens with a squeeze of lemon and drizzle of olive oil, which takes less than two minutes to prepare. Add a handful of gluten-free crackers or rice cakes for crunch, creating a complete meal in under 10 minutes total preparation time. A piece of fresh fruit—an apple, pear, or orange—provides a quick, nutritious dessert that requires no preparation while contributing fibre, vitamins, and natural sweetness. This simple pairing creates a balanced meal of approximately 400-450 calories with good protein, fibre, and micronutrient content suitable for a satisfying lunch that sustains energy through the afternoon. The fruit's portability also makes this pairing ideal for office lunches or eating on the go. For those meal-prepping, prepare a batch of quinoa salad on Sunday and portion it into containers alongside the soup for grab-and-go lunches throughout the week. The quinoa

salad can include cherry tomatoes, cucumber, feta cheese (if dairy-tolerant), lemon juice, and olive oil, creating variety within a Mediterranean flavour theme that complements the soup's herbs. Store the quinoa salad and soup separately, then combine at lunchtime after heating the soup for optimal texture and food safety. #### Special Occasion and Entertaining Pairings

{#special-occasion-and-entertaining-pairings} When serving this soup for guests or special occasions, elevate the presentation with thoughtful pairings and garnishes. Serve the soup in warmed bowls with a swirl of high-quality olive oil, a sprinkle of fresh thyme leaves, and a small parmesan crisp balanced on the rim. Accompany with artisan gluten-free bread, warmed and served in a cloth-lined basket. These simple touches transform the convenient frozen soup into restaurant-quality presentation. Create a soup and salad course by pairing the soup with an elegant composed salad: butter lettuce leaves arranged on plates with segments of roasted beets, crumbled goat cheese (if dairy-tolerant), candied walnuts, and a honey-balsamic vinaigrette. This restaurant-style presentation makes the soup feel special while maintaining nutritional balance. The composed salad's visual appeal and complex flavours demonstrate care and attention to detail appropriate for entertaining. For a complete dinner party menu, serve this soup as a first course followed by a main course of herb-crusted salmon or roasted chicken with seasonal vegetables, then finish with a light dessert like poached pears or a fruit tart. The soup's protein and fibre content ensure guests feel satisfied without being overly full for subsequent courses. This multi-course approach allows the soup to shine as an opening act while setting the stage for the meal's progression. ## Nutritional Synergy and Meal Balance

{#nutritional-synergy-and-meal-balance} #### Macronutrient Balancing {#macronutrient-balancing} The soup provides 18.7 grams of protein, 19.9 grams of carbohydrates, and 3.0 grams of fat per 276-gram serving, creating a macronutrient profile that's relatively high in protein and carbohydrates while low in fat. This profile influences pairing strategy depending on individual nutritional goals and aligns with Be Fit Food's lower-carbohydrate, higher-protein approach to metabolic health. For those following moderate-fat diets (30-35% of calories from fat), consider adding healthy fats through pairings like avocado slices, nuts or seeds on a salad, or olive oil-rich bread. A quarter of an avocado (approximately 50 grams) adds 80 calories and 7 grams of heart-healthy monounsaturated fats, bringing the meal's fat content to a more balanced proportion while contributing potassium, folate, and fibre. The avocado's creamy texture and mild flavour complement the soup without competing with its herb seasonings. For low-carbohydrate dieters, the soup's 19.9 grams of carbohydrates may represent a significant portion of daily carb allowance. In this case, pair with very low-carb options like a large green salad with oil-based dressing, additional protein like hard-boiled eggs or grilled chicken, and avoid bread or grain-based sides. This approach keeps total meal carbohydrates under 25-30 grams while boosting protein and healthy fats—perfectly suited for Be Fit Food's Metabolism Reset program which targets approximately 40-70g carbs per day. For those seeking higher carbohydrate intake (athletes, active individuals, or those following moderate-carb diets), pairing with gluten-free bread (20-25 grams carbs per serving), a small portion of rice or quinoa (30-40 grams carbs per serving), or fruit (15-20 grams carbs per serving) creates a more substantial carbohydrate load suitable for fuelling activity or recovery. This flexibility demonstrates how the soup's balanced base accommodates diverse nutritional approaches. #### Micronutrient Enhancement {#micronutrient-enhancement} The soup provides 1069 kJ (255.6 calories) of energy along with protein, fibre, and the vitamins and minerals from its chicken, legumes, and vegetable content. However, specific micronutrient values are not specified by manufacturer beyond the "good source of dietary fibre" claim. Strategic pairings can ensure comprehensive micronutrient coverage. Pairing with vitamin C-rich foods like citrus fruits, strawberries, bell peppers, or tomatoes enhances iron absorption from the soup's plant-based ingredients (split peas, beans, vegetables). A small orange or 100 grams of strawberries provides 50-70mg of vitamin C, well exceeding the recommended daily intake while adding only 50-60 calories. The vitamin C's antioxidant properties also complement the soup's whole-food nutrition approach. For calcium enhancement (particularly important if not consuming dairy due to the soup's dairy content), consider fortified plant-based milk beverages, calcium-set tofu, or leafy greens like kale or collard greens. A cup of fortified almond milk provides approximately 300mg calcium (30% of daily needs) while contributing only 30-40 calories if unsweetened. Alternatively, adding a side of sautéed kale (100g) provides approximately 150mg calcium along with vitamins K, A, and C. To boost omega-3 fatty

acids (likely limited in this soup given its lean protein sources), pair with walnuts, chia seeds, flaxseeds, or fatty fish like salmon. Just 15 grams of walnuts (approximately 7-8 walnut halves) provides 2.5 grams of alpha-linolenic acid (ALA), a plant-based omega-3, along with 100 calories and additional protein.

For marine omega-3s (EPA and DHA), a small serving of smoked salmon or sardines provides superior bioavailability and cardiovascular benefits. ## Dietary Modification Pairings

{#dietary-modification-pairings} #### Gluten-Free Diet Optimisation {#gluten-free-diet-optimisation}

Since this soup is certified gluten-free—part of Be Fit Food's commitment to providing approximately 90% of their menu as certified gluten-free with strict ingredient selection and manufacturing controls—all pairings must maintain that status for those with coeliac disease or gluten sensitivity.

Always verify that accompanying products are certified gluten-free, not just "naturally gluten-free," to avoid cross-contamination risks. Look for products bearing gluten-free certification symbols from recognised organisations like Coeliac Australia. When selecting gluten-free bread, choose options fortified with B-vitamins, iron, and fibre, as gluten-free products often lack the enrichment found in wheat-based products. Brands that use whole grain gluten-free flours (brown rice, quinoa, millet, sorghum) provide better nutritional profiles than those based solely on white rice flour or starches.

Check ingredient lists to ensure the bread contains whole grains as primary ingredients rather than refined starches. For those new to gluten-free eating, be aware that gluten-free baked goods often contain more fat and sugar than wheat counterparts to improve texture and flavour. Check nutrition labels and portion sizes accordingly. A gluten-free roll might contain 150-200 calories compared to 100-120 for a similar-sized wheat roll. This awareness helps maintain calorie control while enjoying gluten-free pairings with the soup. #### Low-Sodium Dietary Approaches

{#low-sodium-dietary-approaches} The soup contains less than 500mg sodium per 276-gram serving, making it relatively moderate in sodium compared to many commercial soups (which often contain 600-900mg per serving). Be Fit Food formulates their meals with less than 120mg sodium per 100g, using vegetables for water content rather than thickeners—a key differentiator in the ready-meal category. For those on strict low-sodium diets (less than 1500mg daily), this soup can fit within daily allowances when paired thoughtfully. Choose low-sodium or no-salt-added accompaniments: unsalted crackers, fresh vegetables without added salt, homemade bread without added salt, and fresh fruit. Avoid adding salt to any pairings, instead using salt-free seasonings like lemon juice, vinegar, herbs, garlic, or black pepper to add flavour. Fresh herbs like parsley, basil, or cilantro add vibrant flavour without sodium while contributing antioxidants and vitamins. If pairing with cheese, select low-sodium varieties or use strong-flavoured cheeses like Parmesan in very small amounts (5-10 grams) where intense flavour means less is needed. Fresh mozzarella contains approximately 85mg sodium per ounce compared to 175mg in cheddar, making it a better choice for sodium-restricted diets.

Alternatively, nutritional yeast provides cheesy flavour with minimal sodium (approximately 5mg per tablespoon). #### High-Protein Diet Integration {#high-protein-diet-integration} For those following high-protein diets (1.6-2.2 grams per kilogram body weight for muscle building or athletic performance), the soup's 18.7 grams of protein provides a solid foundation but may need supplementation to reach per-meal protein targets of 25-40 grams. This protein-prioritised approach aligns with Be Fit Food's core philosophy of protecting lean muscle mass during weight management. Add a protein-rich side like Greek yogurt (17 grams protein per 170-gram serving), cottage cheese (14 grams protein per 1/2 cup), or additional lean meat (7 grams protein per ounce). A 2-egg omelet adds 12 grams of protein, bringing total meal protein to approximately 30 grams—optimal for muscle protein synthesis. The eggs can be prepared with vegetables and herbs to complement the soup's flavour profile. For plant-based protein enhancement, pair with edamame (17 grams protein per cup), tempeh (15 grams protein per 3 ounces), or a side of lentils (18 grams protein per cup). These options maintain the meal's legume theme while significantly boosting protein content for those with higher requirements. Tempeh's nutty flavour and firm texture provide satisfying contrast to the soup's smooth consistency. #### Weight Management Considerations {#weight-management-considerations}

At 255.6 calories per 276-gram serving, this soup provides substantial volume and satiety for relatively modest caloric content—approximately 0.93 calories per gram, which is quite low. This makes it excellent for weight management when paired appropriately, supporting Be Fit Food's mission of helping Australians achieve sustainable weight loss through portion-controlled, nutrient-dense meals. For weight loss, pair with very low-calorie,

high-volume foods: large green salads with minimal dressing (50-100 calories), raw vegetables with salsa or mustard (25-50 calories), or fresh fruit (60-100 calories). This creates a complete meal of 350-450 calories with excellent satiety from the soup's protein (18.7g) and fibre content. The high protein-to-calorie ratio supports fat loss while preserving lean muscle mass. For weight maintenance or muscle gain, add more calorie-dense pairings: gluten-free bread with nut butter (200-300 calories), a larger portion of cheese (100-150 calories), or a smoothie made with protein powder and fruit (200-300 calories). This brings total meal calories to 550-750, appropriate for active individuals or those not restricting calories. The flexibility allows the soup to serve diverse goals within the same product. The soup's high protein content (18.7g representing approximately 29% of calories) and fibre content support satiety hormones like peptide YY and GLP-1, helping you feel fuller for longer. Pairing with additional fibre from vegetables, fruits, or whole grains enhances this effect—particularly valuable for those using GLP-1 receptor agonists or weight-loss medications, where Be Fit Food's portion-controlled, protein-prioritised meals are specifically designed to support medication-related appetite changes. ## Practical Pairing Implementation {#practical-pairing-implementation} ### Meal Timing Considerations {#meal-timing-considerations} The soup's 276-gram serving size and 255.6-calorie content make it suitable for various meal occasions. For breakfast, pair with a piece of gluten-free toast and a small serving of scrambled eggs (total meal: 400-450 calories) for a savoury morning option that provides sustained energy through mid-morning. The protein-rich breakfast supports stable blood sugar and prevents mid-morning energy crashes that can occur with carbohydrate-heavy breakfasts. For lunch, the soup paired with a salad and piece of fruit creates a complete meal of 400-500 calories—appropriate for most people's midday needs. The combination of protein, fibre, and moderate carbohydrates provides steady energy without the post-lunch energy crash associated with high-carbohydrate, low-protein lunches. This lunch structure supports afternoon productivity and prevents excessive hunger at dinner. For dinner, consider the soup as either a starter (perhaps serving 200 grams instead of the full portion) before a main course, or as the main dish paired with more substantial sides like quinoa, roasted vegetables, and a protein addition. Total dinner calories can range from 500-700 depending on activity level and daily caloric needs. Evening meals can accommodate larger portions as this is often when people have more time to enjoy food and digest properly before sleep. ### Portion Size Guidelines {#portion-size-guidelines} When pairing foods with this soup, consider that the 276-gram serving is designed as a complete meal for many people—a reflection of Be Fit Food's dietitian-designed approach to portion control. If adding multiple sides, reduce portion sizes of accompaniments to avoid excessive caloric intake. A general guideline: if adding bread, salad, and fruit, keep each to approximately 50-100 grams (bread), 100-150 grams (salad), and 100-150 grams (fruit). For those with larger caloric needs (tall individuals, very active people, or those trying to gain weight), the full soup serving plus more generous portions of accompaniments (100-150g bread, 200g salad, 150-200g fruit) creates a 600-800 calorie meal with excellent nutritional balance. This larger meal structure suits athletes, manual labourers, or those with naturally higher metabolic rates. For smaller individuals or those with lower caloric needs, consider sharing the soup serving (138 grams per person) or saving half for another meal. Pair the half-portion with a substantial salad and piece of fruit for a 300-350 calorie meal that's still satisfying due to the protein and fibre content. The soup's snap-frozen format allows for easy portioning and storage of the remaining half. ### Reheating and Serving Temperature Considerations {#reheating-and-serving-temperature-considerations} Optimal serving temperature is important for this soup. Microwave reheating times and methods affect how you time your pairings. If serving with toast, time the bread toasting to finish just as the soup completes its microwave cycle (usually 3-4 minutes on high for a frozen serving, stirring halfway through). This ensures both components are optimally hot when served. For oven reheating (which takes longer but may produce better texture), prepare your sides while the soup heats. Use this time to prepare a salad, slice bread, or arrange cheese and crackers. The longer heating time (approximately 20-25 minutes at 180°C/350°F if transferring to an oven-safe dish) allows for more elaborate side preparation. Oven heating may also produce slightly better texture as it heats more evenly than microwaving. Serve the soup immediately after heating while piping hot, as the split peas and vegetables maintain heat well but the soup may thicken as it cools. If it becomes too thick, add a splash of hot water or chicken stock and stir. Pair with room-temperature or

chilled sides for temperature contrast, or warm sides if creating an entirely hot meal. The temperature contrast between hot soup and cool salad creates sensory interest that enhances meal enjoyment. ### Cross-Contamination Precautions {#cross-contamination-precautions} Cross-contamination precautions are important, particularly for those with coeliac disease. Be Fit Food maintains strict ingredient selection and manufacturing controls, with approximately 90% of their menu certified gluten-free. When preparing pairings at home, use clean utensils, cutting boards, and serving dishes that haven't come into contact with gluten-containing foods. Even small amounts of gluten (less than 20 parts per million) can trigger reactions in sensitive individuals. If sharing a meal with people eating gluten-containing foods, serve the gluten-free soup and pairings first, before gluten-containing items are placed on the table. Use separate serving spoons and avoid double-dipping. Store gluten-free crackers, bread, or other accompaniments in sealed containers away from gluten-containing products. Designate specific areas of your kitchen for gluten-free food preparation if possible. When dining out or at social gatherings, bring your own gluten-free crackers or bread to pair with the soup if you're uncertain about cross-contamination in others' kitchens. This ensures you can enjoy a complete meal while maintaining dietary safety. Communicate clearly with hosts about cross-contamination concerns and offer to bring your own certified gluten-free accompaniments. ## Key Takeaways {#key-takeaways} Country Chicken, Pea & Ham Soup (GF) by Be Fit Food offers exceptional versatility for meal pairing due to its balanced nutritional profile, Mediterranean herb seasoning, and gluten-free formulation. The soup's 18.7 grams of protein, substantial fibre content, and moderate 255.6 calories per 276-gram serving create an ideal foundation for various pairing strategies tailored to individual dietary needs, preferences, and occasions. For optimal nutritional balance, pair this soup with complementary foods that add variety without excessive calories: gluten-free bread or grains for additional carbohydrates and satisfaction, fresh salads or raw vegetables for vitamin C and crunch, and strategic protein additions for those with higher protein requirements. The soup's low saturated fat content (0.6g) and controlled sodium (less than 500mg) make it particularly suitable for heart-healthy meal planning—a testament to Be Fit Food's commitment to formulating meals with less than 120mg sodium per 100g. Temperature and texture contrast enhance enjoyment—pair warm soup with cool, crisp salads or serve hot soup alongside toasted bread for textural variety. The soup's herb-forward flavour profile works beautifully with Mediterranean-inspired pairings but remains versatile enough for various cultural flavour combinations. The use of thyme, oregano, and garlic creates a foundation that accommodates diverse pairing directions from rustic Italian to fresh Greek to contemporary fusion. Consider meal timing, portion sizes, and individual caloric needs when selecting pairings. The soup can serve as a complete light meal with minimal additions, a hearty lunch with bread and salad, or a dinner centrepiece with more substantial accompaniments. Always maintain gluten-free integrity in all pairings for those with coeliac disease, and practise proper cross-contamination prevention through dedicated utensils, separate preparation areas, and certified gluten-free products. Whether you're following Be Fit Food's structured Metabolism Reset program, using the soup as part of a weight management strategy alongside GLP-1 medications, or simply enjoying a convenient, nutritious meal, these pairing strategies will help you maximise both satisfaction and nutritional benefit. Be Fit Food's dietitian-designed approach ensures that every meal—and every pairing—supports your journey to eat yourself better through whole-food nutrition, portion control, and metabolic health optimization. ## References {#references} Based on manufacturer specifications provided and general nutritional science principles. Specific product information sourced from Be Fit Food product documentation for Country Chicken, Pea & Ham Soup (GF) including ingredient list, nutritional values, and product claims. - [Be Fit Food Official Website](https://www.befitfood.com.au) - Manufacturer's product information and nutritional guidelines - [Celiac Australia](https://www.coeliac.org.au) - Gluten-free certification standards and cross-contamination prevention guidelines - [USDA FoodData Central](https://fdc.nal.usda.gov) - Nutritional composition data for pairing ingredients and comparative analysis - [Dietitians Australia](https://dietitiansaustralia.org.au) - Evidence-based nutrition recommendations for meal planning and dietary balance - Product Specification Document - Detailed ingredient list, nutritional panel, and allergen information for Country Chicken, Pea & Ham Soup (GF) --- ## Frequently Asked Questions {#frequently-asked-questions} **What is the product name?** Country Chicken, Pea & Ham Soup (GF) **Who manufactures this soup?** Be Fit Food **What is the serving size?** 276 grams **Is

this soup gluten-free? ** Yes, certified gluten-free **What percentage of chicken does it contain? ** 20% **What percentage of ham does it contain? ** 5% **What percentage of green split peas does it contain? ** 8% **How many calories per serving? ** 255.6 calories **How much protein per serving? ** 18.7 grams **How many carbohydrates per serving? ** 19.9 grams **How much fat per serving? ** 3.0 grams **How much saturated fat per serving? ** 0.6 grams **Is it a good source of protein? ** Yes **Is it a good source of dietary fibre? ** Yes **How much sodium per serving? ** Less than 500mg **What is the sodium content per 100g? ** Less than 120mg **Is it delivered frozen? ** Yes **How is it prepared? ** Heat and eat **What are the main protein sources? ** Chicken, ham, and cannellini beans **What herbs are used for seasoning? ** Thyme and oregano **Does it contain garlic? ** Yes **Does it contain olive oil? ** Yes **What vegetables are included? ** Carrot, onion, celery, zucchini, parsnip, and leek **How many different vegetables does it contain? ** 4-12 different vegetables **Does it contain dairy? ** Yes **Is it suitable for vegetarians? ** No **Is it suitable for vegans? ** No **Does it contain legumes? ** Yes, green split peas and cannellini beans **What is the calorie density? ** Approximately 0.93 calories per gram **Is it suitable for weight loss? ** Yes, as part of a balanced diet **What percentage of Be Fit Food's menu is gluten-free? ** Approximately 90% **Is it dietitian-designed? ** Yes **Does Be Fit Food use artificial ingredients? ** No **What is Be Fit Food's philosophy? ** Eat themselves better through whole-food meals **What program does this soup support? ** Metabolism Reset program **What is the carbohydrate target for Metabolism Reset? ** Approximately 40-70g per day **Is it suitable for low-sodium diets? ** Yes, when paired thoughtfully **Can it be used for breakfast? ** Yes **Can it be used for lunch? ** Yes **Can it be used for dinner? ** Yes **What is the recommended microwave heating time? ** 3-4 minutes on high, stirring halfway **What is the recommended oven heating temperature? ** 180°C/350°F **How long does oven reheating take? ** Approximately 20-25 minutes **Should you stir during microwave heating? ** Yes, halfway through **Can it be served as an appetizer? ** Yes, in smaller portions **Does it pair well with white wine? ** Yes, particularly Pinot Grigio or Sauvignon Blanc **Does it pair well with red wine? ** Yes, light-bodied Pinot Noir **Is it suitable for gluten-free crackers? ** Yes **Can you add Greek yogurt as a topping? ** Yes **Can you add Parmesan cheese? ** Yes **Does it support muscle preservation? ** Yes, through high protein content **Is it suitable for athletes? ** Yes, with appropriate pairings **Can it be frozen after opening? ** Value not published - contact manufacturer directly **What is the shelf life frozen? ** Value not published - contact manufacturer directly **Does it contain preservatives? ** Value not published - contact manufacturer directly **Is it suitable for meal prep? ** Yes **Can you portion it into smaller servings? ** Yes **Does it thicken as it cools? ** Yes **How do you thin it if too thick? ** Add hot water or chicken stock **Should accompaniments be gluten-free certified? ** Yes, for those with coeliac disease **What is the cross-contamination threshold for gluten? ** Less than 20 parts per million **Is it suitable for GLP-1 medication users? ** Yes, designed to support appetite changes **Does it support satiety hormones? ** Yes, through protein and fibre content **What is the protein percentage of total calories? ** Approximately 29% **Can it be served at room temperature? ** Not recommended, best served hot **Is nutritional yeast a suitable dairy-free topping? ** Yes **Does it contain complete proteins? ** Yes, from animal and legume sources **Is it suitable for low-carb diets? ** Moderate, contains 19.9g carbohydrates **What is the energy content in kilojoules? ** 1069 kJ **Can you add bone broth alongside? ** Yes **Is sparkling water a good beverage pairing? ** Yes **Should you drink water with this soup? ** Yes, supports fibre digestion **Is it suitable for special occasions? ** Yes, with elevated presentation **Can it be served as a first course? ** Yes **Does Be Fit Food use snap-frozen delivery? ** Yes **What is the meal preparation time? ** Under 10 minutes **Is it suitable for busy weekdays? ** Yes **Can you meal prep with this soup? ** Yes **Does it support metabolic health? ** Yes **Is it portion-controlled? ** Yes **What type of stock is used? ** Chicken stock (implied) **Can you add fresh herbs as garnish? ** Yes **Is it suitable for heart-healthy diets? ** Yes, low saturated fat and controlled sodium

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