The Difference between Broth and Stock

Broth and stock. What’s the difference? It seems like they would virtually be the same thing, but there are slight differences. Basically the difference comes in how it’s made. Stock is made from the bones and connective tissue of the meat that you are making the stock out of, while broth is the liquid which your meat cooks in.

But to really delve into the differences between broth and stock you need to know the components of what makes a good broth and stock.

What Is Needed to Make a Stock

* Fill a stock pot with the bones of a chicken with plenty of collagen. Include wings, back, neck, and ribs.
* Cover the bones in water. This is your solvent.
* Add fresh carrots, onions, celery, and leeks if you have them. Don’t bother cutting them up, just put it all right in the pot.
* Add fresh herbs if you would like, but this is optional and not at all necessary for making a good stock, as you don’t want to cover up the flavor of the carcass.
* Bring everything to a boil and reduce heat to simmer all day. Strain the liquid out and cool, then refrigerate. You can skim the fat off the top after it has been refrigerated for a few hours.

Your stock will have substantial body to it thanks to the collagen from the bones. This is something that broth will never have.

What Is Needed to Make a Broth

* Place your meat in a stock pot, on the bone or not.
* Cover with water and bring to a boil.
* Add carrots, onion, celery and seasonings (no salt).
* Allow everything to simmer for several hours.
* Skim the fat and strain out the meat. Or, leave the pieces of meat in and add rice or noodles to make a soup.

When to Use Them

Stock and broth can be used in recipes interchangeably. Broth tastes more finished with that fuller taste from the meat. It’s easy enough to turn that stock up a notch, though, and turn it into a broth by just adding meat. Both stock and broth are used as a base for many things like soup, gravies, and sauce. But as you can see, there are very slight differences in how they are made.

Ideally for a stock you want to use bones that are cleaned of all of the meat. This can be hard to achieve in your own home kitchen, though. However, the bones that are picked mostly clean are going to create more of a stock than a broth. Adding the meat just gives it the richer, fuller flavor of the broth.

You can use canned or boxed broth in recipes that call for stock. Fresh stock is not widely available in stores, so if you don’t have enough bones to create a stock, or you don’t have the time, then a canned or boxed broth purchased from the store can be just as good. Use a low sodium broth as most store-bought broths contain high amounts of salt.

And now you know the slight difference between broth and stock.