Creamy Primavera Orzotto

Makes: 4 servings
Prep Time: 10 minutes Cook Time: 20 minutes
Total Time: 30 minutes

Ingredients

Green Stock:

- 1/2 cup Italian parsley leaves
- 1 cup frozen peas (no need to thaw)
- 1 tbsp fresh lemon juice
- 1/2 cup chicken or vegetable stock
- 1 tbsp olive oil

Orzotto:

- 1 large leek, white and light green parts only, thinly sliced
- 1 tsp unsalted butter
- 1 tsp olive oil
- 1 & 1/2 cups dried orzo
- 3 cups chicken or vegetable stock, divided
- 1 bunch asparagus, trimmed and cut into 2-inch pieces
- 1 cup frozen peas, thawed

Garnish:

- 1/2 cup grated Parmesan cheese

Instructions

Prepare the green stock by combining the parsley, frozen peas, lemon juice, and 1/2 cup stock in a blender. Blend until smooth, then slowly drizzle in the olive oil while blending. Set aside.

Place the sliced leeks in a bowl of cold water and swish them around to remove any grit. Lift the leeks from the water and pat dry.

Heat the butter and olive oil in a large skillet or Dutch oven over medium heat. Add the leeks and cook for 3 to 4 minutes until softened. If they begin to brown, add a splash of water.

Stir in the orzo and cook for 1 minute, coating the pasta with the butter and oil.

Add 2 cups of the stock and bring to a gentle simmer. Cook, stirring occasionally, until most of the liquid has been absorbed, about 6 minutes.

Add the asparagus and the remaining 1 cup of stock. Continue cooking for about 4 minutes, stirring frequently.

Stir in the green stock and thawed peas. Cook for another 2 minutes until heated through and the orzo is creamy.

Serve immediately, topped with freshly grated Parmesan cheese.

Chef's Notes:

- Orzo continues to absorb liquid as it sits, so serve it as soon as it's finished cooking for the creamiest texture.
- If the orzotto becomes too thick, stir in a splash of warm stock just before serving.
- Fresh English peas can be substituted when they're in season.
- Finish with a little lemon zest or fresh herbs for even more spring flavor.
- For a heartier meal, top with grilled chicken, shrimp, or seared salmon.

Recipe by Salt & Serenity