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Smart and Sassy Springtime Cooking Series

**Spring "Greens"**

*Chef Mary Beth Brinkerhoff, Owner For Goodness Taste Inc. Personal Chef Services May 5, 2012*



**Chicken over Braised Lemony Leeks**

**Serves 4**

4 boneless skinless chicken breasts  
1 Tbsp. fresh thyme, minced  
8 small or medium leeks, tough outer leaves discarded and leeks trimmed to about 7 inches long and cut lengthwise into quarters or eighths  
2 tablespoons unsalted butter  
1 Tbsp extra virgin olive oil  
¼-1/2 cup chicken broth  
¼ c. white wine  
Juice of 2 lemons  
1 Tbsp. freshly grated lemon zest (two lemons)

Season chicken breasts with salt, pepper and thyme on both sides. Heat a wide skillet over medium-high heat. Add olive oil and heat until shimmering and then sear the chicken breasts until browned, about 4 minutes, then flip and sear the other side for 3-4 minutes. Remove to a plate.

In a shallow dish soak leeks in cold water to cover 15 minutes, rubbing occasionally to remove any grit. Add butter to the skillet and reduce heat to medium. Lift leeks out of the water and with water still clinging to them add to skillet. Cook leeks, stirring occasionally, five minutes and add wine, broth and lemon juice. Add chicken back to pan, braise covered, 10-15 minutes, or until very tender. Add lemon zest and season with salt and pepper.

**Israeli Cous Cous with Asparagus, Peas and Sugar Snap Peas**

**(Bon Appetit, June 2010)**

4 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil, divided  
1/2 teaspoon finely grated lemon peel  
2 tablespoons fresh lemon juice (2 lemons)  
2 large garlic cloves, minced, divided  
1 1/3 cups Israeli couscous (6 to 7 ounces)  
1 3/4 cups (or more) vegetable broth  
14 ounces slender asparagus spears, trimmed, cut diagonally into 3/4-inch pieces (about 2 1/2 cups)  
8 ounces sugar snap peas, trimmed, cut diagonally into 1/2-inch pieces (about 2 1/2 cups)  
1 cup shelled fresh green peas or frozen, thawed  
1/3 cup chopped fresh chives  
1/3 cup chopped fresh mint  
1/2 cup finely grated Parmesan cheese

Whisk 2 tablespoons oil, lemon juice, 1 garlic clove, and lemon peel in small bowl; set dressing aside. Heat 1 tablespoon oil in heavy medium saucepan over medium heat. Add couscous, sprinkle with salt, and sauté until most of couscous is golden brown, about 5 minutes. Add 1 3/4 cups broth, increase heat, and bring to boil. Reduce heat to medium-low, cover, and simmer until liquid is absorbed and couscous is tender, about 10 minutes, adding more broth if too dry.

Meanwhile, heat remaining 1 tablespoon oil in heavy large nonstick skillet over high heat. Add asparagus, sugar snap peas, green peas, and remaining garlic clove. Sprinkle with salt and pepper; sauté until crisp-tender, about 3 minutes. Transfer vegetables to large bowl.

Add couscous to bowl with vegetables. Drizzle dressing over. Add chives and cheese; toss. Season with salt and pepper.



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### **Creamy Spring Onion Soup**

2 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil  
4 bunches scallions—white and tender green parts cut into 1-inch lengths, green tops thinly sliced  
4 leeks, white and tender green parts only, thinly sliced  
1 fennel bulb, thinly sliced  
1 onion, thinly sliced  
Salt and freshly ground white pepper  
2 cups dry white wine  
3 cups water  
1/2 cup heavy cream (Can sub 2% milk)  
3/4 cup buttermilk  
2 ounces fresh goat cheese (1/4 cup), softened

In a large pot, heat the oil. Add the white and tender green parts of the scallions, along with the leeks, fennel and onion; season with salt and white pepper. Cook over low heat, stirring, until the vegetables begin to soften, 15 minutes. Add the wine and boil over high heat until reduced to a few tablespoons, 12 minutes. Add the water and cream and bring to a simmer. Cook until the vegetables are very tender and pale green, 15 minutes. Add the scallion green tops and cook just until softened, 2 minutes.

Working in batches, puree the soup in a blender and return it to the pot. Season with salt and white pepper.

In a medium bowl, whisk the buttermilk with the goat cheese. Ladle the soup into shallow bowls, drizzle with the creamed goat cheese and serve. **MAKE AHEAD** The soup and creamed goat cheese can be refrigerated separately overnight. Reheat the soup before serving.

### **Honeydew with Mint, Basil and Lime**

3 cups 1-inch cubes honeydew melon (about 1/2 melon)  
2 tablespoons fresh lime juice  
1 tablespoon fresh opal basil leaves or chopped fresh basil leaves  
1 tablespoon chopped fresh mint leaves  
sugar to taste if desired

In a bowl combine all ingredients and chill.



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