

RECIPES MAY 2015

SPRING VEGETABLE AND HERB FRITTATA

Ingredients for four. 700g new potatoes, eight asparagus spears, 350g frozen baby broad beans, six eggs, two tablespoons olive oil, tablespoon each chopped chervil and tarragon, sea salt, freshly-ground black pepper.

Method. Hold the asparagus spears close to the base and bend until they snap. Discard the tough base section but reserve for soup. Cut the asparagus into one-inch lengths. Scrub the potatoes and halve. Steam all the vegetables until only just tender and dry on kitchen towel. Heat the oil in a large frying pan and add the potatoes, beans and asparagus. Sauté for a few minutes until the potatoes start to take on a little colour. Season well. Beat the eggs with the herbs and pour over the vegetables. Stir with a spatula to distribute evenly, cook for a minute or two then finish off under a medium hot grill. Serve with green salad and crusty bread.

ASPARAGUS PEA AND MINT SOUP

Ingredients for four to six. Tablespoon finely-chopped shallot, 500g asparagus spears plus any trimmings, 50g butter, litre of (preferably home-made) chicken stock, 200g frozen peas, four to five sprigs of mint, tablespoon chopped mint leaves, sea salt, freshly-ground black pepper.

Method. Cut the asparagus into one-inch chunks and sauté with the shallot for a few minutes in the butter. Add the warmed chicken stock and the mint sprigs and simmer for seven to eight minutes. Add the frozen peas and simmer for another two minutes. Remove the mint. Allow to cool slightly then liquidise either in a processor or with a hand-held blender. Pass through a fine sieve or a chinois using a wooden spoon to extract as much of the vegetables as possible, leaving behind any stringy asparagus fibres. Season the soup well, add the chopped mint, bring back up to heat and serve immediately.

HERB-STUFFED BELLY PORK

Ingredients for four to six. One boned and scored piece of belly pork weighing 1.6 kg, juice of half a lemon, three garlic cloves, tablespoon each fresh rosemary, thyme and sage, all finely-chopped, tablespoon olive oil, sea salt, freshly-ground black pepper, tablespoon olive oil.

Method. In a mortar or basin pound together the garlic and herbs then add the olive oil and lemon juice. Place the pork rind side down on a board and spread the mixture along the edge nearest you. Roll up the pork along the longest side and tie tightly with string at every inch or so. Rub generously with sea salt and black pepper. Place on a rack over a roasting pan and roast at 200C gas mark 6 for 20 minutes then turn down the heat to 170C gas mark 3 and cook for a further two and a half hours. Slice into thick rounds and serve hot or cold.

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