

# An Unlikely Culinary Column: English Peas

By Karen Kain

Nothing can replace the wholesome taste of freshly shelled English peas.

After my trip to the UK, I decided to give English peas another try. I can honestly say that I have not been a fan, until now. I was raised eating canned peas, which was not at all helpful. As an adult, I revisited cooking with frozen peas, sprinkling them in my soups and chicken potpie dishes. Last week I found some fresh English peas in their pods and I believe that I have been converted to a lover of fresh English peas.

The peak months for fresh English peas are March through May and again from August to November. When choosing peas look for the plump, unblemished deep green pods. Inside, the peas should be glossy, sweet and crunchy. Once picked, they begin the conversion from sugar to starch so buy fresh and cook quickly. They stay stored in the refrigerator for 2-3 days and should be shelled just before cooking. I challenge you to refrain from snacking on these fresh delights while shelling.

English Peas are rich in vitamin A, B and folic acid. They are also full of calcium, iron, zinc and potassium. They contain protein and fiber and have anti-inflammatory properties that aid the prevention of diabetes, heart disease and arthritis. Best when served raw, steamed or stir fried.

I thoroughly enjoyed cooking each of these dishes and happily consumed all three. I have to add that the pesto recipe was delicious and I think it is a gateway to many more pea pesto recipe ideas. Please feel free to switch out the fish in the Halibut recipe for your favorite fish. I hope you enjoy these recipes and I would love to hear about your favorite summer dishes.

## English Peas with Kale and Tomato Pasta

### Ingredients

- 2 Cups Fresh Green Peas shelled
- 1 Teaspoon Salt
- 1 Tablespoon Olive oil
- 3 Tablespoons Butter
- 3 Tablespoons Olive oil
- 1 Shallot minced
- 1 Cup Lady Moon Farms cherry tomatoes cut in half
- 1/2 Cup Freshly grated parmesan
- 16 Large Shrimp
- 5 Cloves Garlic Minced
- 1 Pound Fettuccine noodles



### Directions:

Bring a large pot of water with 1teaspoon salt and 1 tablespoon olive oil to boil. Mince the shallots and put into a large skillet and sauté with 3 tablespoons of olive oil and 3 tablespoons butter. Add the garlic and sauté until soft, about 5-6 minutes. Add the peas and tomatoes and sauté for 7 minutes. Remove the stems and chop the kale. Add the pasta to the boiling water and cook as directed. While the pasta is cooking add the shrimp to the tomato and pea mixture. Cook until the shrimp is bright orange. Add the chopped kale into the last three minutes of the pasta water. When the pasta and kale is cooked drain. Add the pasta and kale mixture to the shrimp, tomato and onions and stir to fully combine the flavors. Serve immediately with crusty bread.

## Halibut with English Peas and Mustard Sauce

### Ingredients:

- 1 Cup fresh green peas shelled, or 1 cup frozen
- 1 Tablespoon olive oil
- To taste salt & pepper
- 1 Shallot, minced
- 3/4 Cup dry white wine or vegetable stock
- 1/4 Cup apple cider vinegar
- 1 Tablespoon whole grain mustard
- 1 Stick unsalted butter
- 2 Tablespoon Scallions chopped

### Directions:

Remove the peas from the pods. Blanch in boiling salted water until bright green and just tender about 3 minutes. Transfer to an ice bath and allow to cool completely, then drain. Preheat oven to 400° F. Rub the halibut with ol-

ive oil and salt and pepper. Line a baking dish with parchment paper and bake 15-20 minutes, until the fish is cooked and can be easily flaked with a fork. In a small saucepan combine the shallot, wine and vinegar and bring to a boil. Reduce to a simmer and cook until liquid is reduced to about 2 tablespoons. Whisk in the mustard and butter 1/4 of the stick at a time. Once the butter melts add the next quarter. Season with salt and pepper. Arrange the fish and peas on the plate, top with the sauce and sprinkle the scallions. Enjoy!

## Green Pea & Kale Pesto Toast with Soft Cooked Eggs

### Ingredients:

- 4 Eggs
- 2 Cups fresh green peas shelled
- To taste salt & pepper
- 1 Clove garlic, minced
- 2 Tablespoons pine nuts, toasted
- 1/2 Cup basil leaves packed
- 1/2 Cup kale packed
- 1/4 Cup freshly grated parmesan
- 1/3 Cup olive oil
- 4 Slices rustic bread toasted
- 1/4 Teaspoon crushed red pepper flakes

### Directions:

Bring a medium saucepan of water to a boil and gently lower the eggs into the water. Turn off the heat and cover, letting the eggs cook for 6 minutes, immediately submerge into an ice bath and cool completely. In a small saucepan bring salted water to a boil and blanch the peas until they are bright green and tender, about 3-4 minutes. Transfer the peas to an ice bath and cool completely. (Skip this step if using frozen peas). In a blender or food processor pulse the peas, pine nuts, basil, kale, garlic, salt, pepper, pepper flakes and cheese together slowly drizzling the olive oil to make a pesto. Spread the pea pesto onto the toast. Peel the eggs and serve on top of the pesto sprinkling with salt and pepper. Enjoy!

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