

Green Minestrone

with thanks to Nigel Slater on the Guardian website

This summery soup can be as hearty or as light as you like, and makes a wonderful main course in Summer. Broad beans and peas are both really good from the freezer if you don't have fresh. I use bouillon powder for the stock.

Serves 4

broad beans in the pod 400g
baby leeks 200g
spring onions 200g
olive oil
small courgettes 200g
flageolet beans 400g cans
peas 200g podded weight
vegetable stock 1 litre
chives 20g
parsley a handful
grated parmesan to serve



Pod the broad beans, boil them in lightly salted water, then drain and cool under running water. Unless they are really young and small, I like to pop them out of their pale skins.

Thickly slice the leeks (I like to do them diagonally). Thinly slice the spring onions. Cook them in a saucepan, in a couple of tablespoons of olive oil, covered with a piece of greaseproof or baking parchment. This will encourage them to steam and soften rather than fry. You want them to be tender, but they shouldn't brown. Cut the courgettes into short lengths.

When the leeks and spring onions are soft and still bright green, remove the greaseproof paper, add the courgettes, the flageolet beans, peas and then the vegetable stock, bring to the boil, turn down to a simmer then add the chives, chopped into short lengths. Roughly chop the parsley and stir into the soup. Season and pass round a dish of grated Parmesan.