

Four Simple Menus to Feed a Crowd P.97

★ Step Up Your Supper Club!

Cooking Light

APRIL 2016

Spring Made Easy!

67

Fresh Recipes to Savor the Season

25-MINUTE CRAB CAKES

◀ P.26

MAKE
The Best Slow Cooker Chicken

MEET
The New Queen of Whole Grains

Plus! Perfect DIY Dumplings

Visit cookinglight.com

\$4.99 US \$6.50 CAN

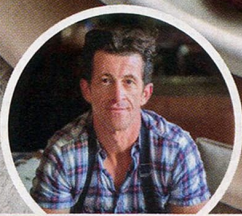


0 72440 10403 7 04

April 2016

TRENDING
TASTES
from
COOKING
LIGHT'S
EDITORS

let's get COOKing!



TODAY'S SPECIAL

Luscious beets,
citrus, and peas
Recipe p. 14

Spring Beet and Pea Salad

Chef Robbie Wilson's dish is as wondrously light and colorful as the season itself.

BY TIM CEBULA

When spring produce starts to peak, it's time for a lighter touch. Winter's rich braises and hearty roasts give way to delicate dishes celebrating fresh abundance.

"Spring is visually a beautiful season for food, and it's the sweetest time of the year," says chef Robbie

Wilson of Bird Dog in Palo Alto, California. Ingredients such as fresh baby beets and green peas perfectly highlight exactly what Wilson loves about cooking right now.

"When they first come into season, peas and beets have done all the work for us," he says. The sweet peas don't even need to be cooked. Served



let's get cooking!

raw, they're both lightly crunchy and naturally tender, and their sugars haven't yet turned to starch. "I like vegetables you don't even have to cook too much. There's energy in that pea, and the longer you cook it, the more energy you lose. I try to respect the integrity of the ingredients."

Wilson says because the main components of the salad skew slightly sweet, he achieves flavor balance from both technique and supporting ingredients. He roasts the beets until just tender, which heightens their sweetness while preserving a little of their acidity. At Bird Dog, he fills out the dish with Lollo Rosso lettuce, a crisp and curly red-leafed variety with light bitterness. The citrus dressing is tinged with grapefruit juice for a little more tartness, while snipped fresh herbs add alluring fragrance. And a few dollops of fresh ricotta gild this spring lily (we use the *Cooking Light* microwave method for fresh ricotta here, but if you're looking to splurge a little, try the artisanal ricotta featured at the bottom right corner of this page).

"What I love about dishes like this is that you can taste the season," Wilson says. Try his original version of the salad this month at Bird Dog in downtown Palo Alto.

SPRING BEET AND PEA SALAD

Hands-on: 17 min. Total: 1 hr. 57 min.

Wilson suggests using your best olive oil to indulge both your veggies and your palate.

- 3 baby red beets, roots and stems removed
- 3 baby yellow beets, roots and stems removed
- 1 cup 2% reduced-fat milk
- 1/4 cup plain Greek yogurt
- 1 teaspoon cider vinegar
- 2 blood oranges
- 2 tablespoons fresh grapefruit juice
- 1 teaspoon Dijon mustard
- 1 teaspoon honey

- 1/4 teaspoon kosher salt
- 3 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil
- 8 cups torn curly-leaf lettuce
- 1/3 cup fresh flat-leaf parsley leaves
- 1/3 cup small fresh mint leaves
- 1/3 cup chopped fresh chives
- 3/4 cup shelled fresh or frozen green peas, thawed

1. Preheat oven to 375°.
2. Wrap red beets loosely in foil. Wrap yellow beets loosely in foil. Place both packages in a roasting pan; roast at 375° for 45 minutes or until just tender. Cool completely. Peel beets, and cut into quarters; set aside.
3. Combine milk, yogurt, and vinegar in a microwave-safe liquid measuring cup; microwave at HIGH for 3 minutes. Stir to form small curds. Strain through a sieve lined with a double layer of cheesecloth; let stand 5 minutes. Discard liquid. Set cheese mixture aside.
4. Peel and section oranges over a bowl; squeeze membranes to extract juice. Set sections aside; reserve 2 tablespoons juice. Discard membranes.
5. Combine blood orange juice, grapefruit juice, mustard, honey, and salt in a small bowl. Slowly pour in olive oil, stirring constantly with a whisk. Place half of juice mixture in a small bowl. Add yellow beets; toss well to coat. Divide yellow beets evenly among 6 small plates. Add red beets to bowl; toss well to coat. Divide red beets and orange sections among the plates.
6. Place remaining juice mixture in a large bowl. Add lettuce and herbs to bowl; toss well to coat. Place about 3/4 cup lettuce mixture on each plate. Place about 1 tablespoon cheese mixture on each serving. Sprinkle each serving with 2 tablespoons peas.

▶ SERVES 6

CALORIES 155; **FAT** 8.6g (sat 1.9g, mono 5.4g, poly 0.9g); **PROTEIN** 6g; **CARB** 15g; **FIBER** 4g; **SUGARS** 9g (est. added sugars 0g); **CHOL** 6mg; **IRON** 2mg; **SODIUM** 221mg; **CALC** 118mg

GOOD GEAR

Smart Bottle

Thermos's 24-ounce Connected Hydration Bottle with Smart Lid helps you reach your daily hydration goals. Bluetooth technology in the lid syncs with your iPhone and/or a Fitbit to monitor your water temperature and intake. Just set your preferences and get sipping.

\$60, thermos.com —DARCY LENZ



SPRING CHEESE

BUILD YOUR BEST BOARD

- 1 **HERVE MONS**, *Bonde du Poitou*
This rich, semisoft pasteurized goat's milk cheese offers clean flavor and light acidity.
- 2 **LANDAFF CREAMERY**, *Landaff*
This semifirm raw cow's milk cheese is mildly tangy and delightfully buttery.
- 3 **CAPRIOLE**, *Wabash Cannonball*
This creamy, dense ash-ripened goat cheese delivers a delicious goaty funk.
- 4 **BELLWETHER FARMS**, *Basket Ricotta*
This whole-milk, hand-dipped ricotta is impossibly silky with rich cultured milk flavor.



PHOTOGRAPHY: (TOP RIGHT) COURTESY OF GENUINE THERMOS BRAND, APPLE INC.