

Gratin of eggs with basil-lemon cream, prosciutto, peas

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Can be made without the prosciutto for a yummy vegetarian dish

Basil-Lemon Cream

½ small bunch fresh basil
½ cup heavy cream
1 clove garlic, smashed
¼ teaspoon finely grated lemon rind
Pinch of salt

1. Roughly cut the basil, leaves and stem, into thirds and put into a small saucepan. Add the cream, garlic and lemon rind. Bring to a simmer over medium-low heat, stir in the salt, then remove from the heat. Set aside to cool.
2. Set a fine mesh strainer over a bowl. Pour the cream through it, pressing the basil to extract any liquid.

Eggs

Butter (for the dish)
Salt and pepper, to taste
1 cup fresh or frozen peas
4 ounces prosciutto, torn into ½ inch strips
8 eggs
½ cup grated parmesan
Handful fresh basil leaves, thinly sliced (for garnish)

1. Set the oven at 350 degrees. Butter a 1 ½ quart shallow baking dish. Set the dish in a large roasting pan.
2. Bring a small saucepan of salted water to boil. Add the peas, return to a boil and cook 1 minute. Drain and rinse under a cold running tap until the peas are cool.
3. Scatter the prosciutto and peas in the baking dish. Make 8 shallow wells in the mixture and carefully crack an egg into each. Pour the basil cream around the yolks to cover the whites.
4. Pour about 1 inch boiling hot water into the space between the baking dish and roasting pan to come about halfway up the sides.
5. Bake for 20 minutes or until the yolks are just set. The eggs will continue to cook after they are removed from the oven, so take them out just before they bake to the desired doneness. Sprinkle with parmesan. Let the dish rest for a couple of minutes before serving. Garnish with basil and serve with crusty bread or toast.