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Freekeh Risotto with Fresh Snap Pea-Asparagus Puree

By Susie Iventosch

INGREDIENTS

1 cup cracked Freekeh
2 1/2 cups chicken broth (divided: 2 cups and 1/2 cup)
2 asparagus stalks, sliced into 1/8-inch slices on the angle (reserve a few slices for garnish)
2 asparagus stalks, cut into 1/2-inch pieces for puree
8 ounces snap peas, half sliced into 1/8-inch slices and the rest cut in half or quarters for the puree.
Set aside several of the peas inside for garnish.
2 green onions, chopped
2 tablespoons olive oil
2 tablespoons cream or half and half
Salt and white pepper, to taste

DIRECTIONS

In a skillet, heat olive oil and cook onions with sliced snap peas and asparagus, over medium-high heat until onions are translucent, but veggies are al dente. Add Freekeh and cook for another few minutes, tossing all together. Add 1 cup of the broth and cook until absorbed, stirring occasionally. Add second cup of broth and cook until absorbed, again stirring occasionally. Set aside.

Meanwhile, put the remaining asparagus chunks into a food processor along with the cut up snap peas and puree until very fine. Add a half cup of the chicken broth and two tablespoons cream and continue to puree until as smooth as possible. Adjust thickness by adding a little more broth at a time, if you think it's too thick.

Season with sea salt and white pepper. Transfer puree to a small sauce pan and cook over medium heat until just heated through.

Serve Freekeh on a plate, and drizzle puree over the top and sides. Garnish with thin slices of raw asparagus and raw snap peas. In order to make the Freekeh look molded, I just packed it into small ramekins and then inverted onto plates.

Reach the reporter at: suziven@gmail.com

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