



Apricots with basil-goat cheese and almonds

MAKES 40 HORS D'OEUVRES | 15 MINUTES

Deeply flavorful Blenheim apricots (tangier and sweeter than Turkish apricots) and stubby, rich Marcona almonds are worth using here, because in a recipe this simple, the flavors are really noticeable.

4 oz. fresh goat cheese such as Laura Chenel, at room temperature

About 2 tsp. milk

2 tbsp. finely chopped fresh basil

40 dried apricots, preferably Blenheim*

40 almonds, preferably Marcona or Marchini*

2 tsp. honey

1. Mix together cheese, 2 tsp. milk, and basil with a wooden spoon until spreadable. Thin with more milk if necessary.

2. Spread a heaping $\frac{1}{4}$ tsp. cheese on each apricot and top each with an almond. Drizzle with honey.

*Find dried Blenheims and Spanish Marcona almonds [or California-grown Marchini, which are similar] at well-stocked grocery stores, or order Blenheims from B&R Farms (bfrfarms.com) and Marchini from J. Marchini Farms (marchinialmond.com).



Make ahead: 1 day ahead. Bring to room temperature, and drizzle with honey before serving.

PER SERVING 36 CAL., 31% (11 CAL.) FROM FAT, 1 G PROTEIN, 1.2 G FAT (0.5 SAT.), 5.8 G CARBO (1 G FIBER), 11 MG SODIUM, 1.3 MG CHOL.

Lemon ricotta risotto with asparagus, peas, and prosciutto

SERVES 6 | 1 1/2 HOURS

This risotto is a lot more lemony than you might expect, so get ready for some bracing tang along with the rich cheeses.

2 oz. thinly sliced prosciutto

1 lb. asparagus, bottom ends cut or snapped off

1 tsp. plus 1 tbsp. olive oil

Salt and pepper

8 cups reduced-sodium chicken broth

1 large yellow onion, coarsely chopped

2 cups Arborio or Carnaroli rice

1/2 cup dry white wine

1/4 cup finely chopped fresh mint

1/2 cup whole-milk ricotta such as Bellwether Farms

1 cup fresh or frozen peas

1/2 cup lemon juice (from 1 to 2 large lemons)

3 tbsp. unsalted butter

3 oz. finely shredded Spring Hill or Vella Dry Jack cheese or parmesan, plus 1 oz. shaved, using a vegetable peeler

1. Preheat oven to 400°. Set a rack in a rimmed baking sheet and lay prosciutto slices on rack.

2. Arrange asparagus in a single layer on another baking sheet. Drizzle with 1 tsp. oil. Sprinkle with salt and pepper; toss to coat.

3. Bake prosciutto and asparagus until prosciutto is crisp and very light brown around the edges, about 8 minutes, and asparagus is a little darker and tender when pricked with the tip of a knife, 12 to 15 minutes. Remove both from oven and let cool. When cool enough to handle, cut asparagus into 1-in. pieces. Break prosciutto into small shards.

4. Pour broth into a medium saucepan; bring to a simmer over medium heat.

5. Heat remaining oil in a large pot over medium-high heat. Add onion and cool, stirring occasionally, until limp but not brown, about 5 minutes. Add rice and cook, stirring constantly, until edges turn bright white, 2 minutes. Add wine; bring to a boil and cook until almost evaporated, about 2 minutes.

6. Add one ladleful, about 1/2 cup, of broth to rice and cook, stirring, until almost completely absorbed by rice. Continue adding broth 1/2 cup at a time, stirring until each addition is absorbed before adding the next, until rice is just tender to the bite, 15 to 30 minutes (you will have broth left over).

7. Stir in mint, ricotta, peas (if using fresh), and lemon juice and stir until most of lemon juice is absorbed. Add butter and shredded cheese; stir until well mixed. Stir in peas (if frozen), asparagus, and pepper to taste. **»98**