



SPRING FRESH

spring pea soup with bacon bread crumbs

4 oz. bacon

2 slices white sandwich bread, processed
into fine crumbs

2 Tbs. chopped fresh mint

2 Tbs. chopped fresh flat-leaf parsley

Salt and freshly ground pepper, to taste

2 Tbs. extra-virgin olive oil

½ cup finely chopped shallots

2 lb. shelled fresh or frozen English peas

4 cups chicken broth

¼ cup heavy cream

Heat cast-iron fry pan over medium-high heat. Cook bacon, turning once, until crisp, 2–3 minutes per side; drain on paper towels.

Discard all but 1 Tbs. fat from pan; reduce heat to medium. Add bread crumbs; cook, stirring occasionally, until toasted and golden, 8–10 minutes. Transfer to bowl. In mini food processor, process bacon into fine bits. Stir bacon, mint, parsley, salt and pepper into bread crumbs. Set aside.

In 5½-qt. Dutch oven over medium-high heat, warm oil. Add shallots; sauté until softened, 4–5 minutes. Stir in peas, broth, salt and pepper; bring to boil. Reduce heat to medium-low; simmer until peas are tender, 12–20 minutes. Stir in cream. Using food processor, puree soup in batches until smooth. Season with salt and pepper. Ladle soup into warmed bowls; garnish with bacon bread crumbs. Serve immediately. Serves 6.