

Farfalle with Peas, Spring Onions & Ricotta

Serves 4-5

I like this with buckwheat soba sometimes in place of the farfalle or other chunky pasta.

12 to 14 ounces farfalle, twists, orechiette or other flat chunky pasta

About 1 cup tiny young shelled peas

4 to 5 green or spring onions, very thinly sliced

2 to 3 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil or unsalted butter or mixture half and half

7 to 8 ounces whole milk ricotta cheese

Salt and freshly ground black pepper to taste

Freshly grated Parmesan

Instructions: Cook the pasta in boiling salted water according to package instructions. When nearly al dente, add the peas to the water and continue cooking until the peas are bright green and tender and the pasta just al dente. Set aside a cup of the cooking water and then drain the pasta and peas.

Return the pasta and peas to the still hot pan and toss first with the green onions and olive oil, then the ricotta, salt and pepper and Parmesan. Serve right away.

Per serving: 458 calories, 17 g protein, 63 g carbohydrate, 15 g fat (5 g saturated), 25 mg cholesterol, 47 mg sodium, 5 g fiber.

Wine pairing: Ricotta is not as heavy on the palate as cream, so it goes well with a dry, lighter-bodied rosé or a fresh, clean white wine like the 2007 Pillar Box White from South Australia (\$12), which is a blend of Chardonnay, Sauvignon Blanc and Verdelho.



Eric Luse / The Chronicle; styled by Shannon Shafer

Lemony Pasta with Artichokes & Goat Cheese

Serves 4-5

If you like, feel free to add barely cooked asparagus to this dish (pictured above).

8 to 10 small artichokes, 12-18 fresh artichoke hearts, or 3-4 medium-size artichokes

Extra virgin olive oil, as needed or desired

5 cloves garlic, coarsely chopped

Kosher salt, to taste

12 ounces penne or pennette

6-8 stalks asparagus, sliced diagonally into 1-inch lengths, lightly cooked and drained, optional

Zest and juice of 1 lemon (1-2 tablespoons)

About 3-4 ounces fresh goat cheese, crumbled

2 to 3 tablespoons chopped flat leaf parsley

A few spoonfuls or gratings of Parmesan or pecorino, optional

Instructions: Clean the artichokes down to their hearts, if necessary, stripping off the dark outer leaves and scooping out the fuzzy choke (it

is not necessary to do this if using fresh artichoke hearts). Slice the artichokes almost paper thin, and place in a bowl of cold salted water as each is finished.

When artichokes are ready to be cooked, drain them and pat dry.

In a nonstick frying pan, heat a tablespoon of olive oil and add a single layer of the artichokes, letting them brown lightly, then pushing them aside and adding more artichokes plus a teeny bit more oil, if needed. Ideally you'd like them to brown, even char a bit in places, but not really fry, so go easy with the oil. Remove from the heat and toss with the garlic, and salt to taste.

Add salt to a large pot of water and bring to a boil. Cook the pasta according to package directions until very al dente. Reserve about 1/2 cup of the cooking water, then drain the pasta.

Return pasta to pot and add the artichokes; asparagus, if using; a few tablespoons of the cooking liquid; the lemon zest; and a few tablespoons of

olive oil. Cook a moment or two, mixing well to evenly distribute the artichoke bits.

Remove from the heat and toss in the lemon juice (go easy at first — you can always add more), goat cheese and parsley.

Taste and adjust seasonings. Serve right away, with Parmesan or pecorino, as desired.

Per serving: 410 calories, 13 g protein, 55 g carbohydrate, 16 g fat (4 g saturated), 8 mg cholesterol, 134 mg sodium, 6 g fiber.

Wine pairing: Though artichoke is a main ingredient, it is not a pairing problem. The fairly tart, lemony flavor has hints of tang from the goat cheese — a combination that helps balance this moderately rich dish. A bright white wine like Sauvignon Blanc will work well, especially if it is slightly grassy, like New Zealand Sauvignon Blanc.