

Summer Pea and Lettuce Soup

You can make the soup a day ahead of time and reheat it just before serving.

The soup can be served hot or cold with a drizzle of heavy cream, sour cream, or yogurt, and a sprinkling of fresh chives. It can also be frozen for up to three months.

The Pea Broth

2 pounds shelling peas, also called English peas

6 cups water or chicken broth

1 onion, chopped

6 peppercorns

Salt

The Soup

1 1/2 tablespoons olive oil

2 sweet Vidalia onions, chopped

Salt and freshly ground black pepper

1/4 cup chopped fresh chives

1 bunch tender lettuce, cored, and well washed and dried

Heavy cream, optional

Shell the peas. Place the shells in a large pot and place the shelled peas in a small bowl and set aside. Sure, go ahead, eat a few.

Make the broth: In the large pot with the pea shells, add the water or broth, onion, peppercorns and a hefty sprinkling of salt. Bring to a boil, reduce the heat to low, and let simmer, slightly covered, for about 1 hour. The broth should be sweet and taste of peas.

In another large pot, heat the oil over low heat. Add the onions, salt, and pepper and cook, stirring occasionally, for 15 minutes, or until the onions are soft and a pale golden color. Add the peas and half the chives and cook, stirring, for 5 minutes.

Strain the broth over the peas and onions and raise the heat to high. Bring to a boil, reduce the heat, and let cook, uncovered, for 15 minutes. Taste the broth — if it tastes weak cook another 10 minutes. Add the lettuce and cook 5 minutes. Remove from the heat and let cool about 5 minutes. Working in a blender or food processor, puree the soup. Return to the pot and cook over moderate heat for about 10 minutes, or until slightly thickened and flavorful. Season to taste.

Serve hot with a sprinkling of the remaining chives and a drizzle of cream, if desired. Serves 6 to 8.

Optional Additions (as seen on video)

Add 2 chopped scallions to the pea broth

Top with a sprinkling of garlic scapes.

Other idea for Fresh Garden Peas

- Add them raw to hot linguine or your favorite pasta shape -
- so the heat of the pasta just begins to “cook” them – along with sautéed onions, a touch of cream or crème fraiche and some fresh herbs.
- Make a pea salad using raw peas or lightly steamed peas mixed with chopped fresh mint, olive oil and lemon juice.
- Make a pea pesto: puree raw peas with olive oil, a clove of garlic, salt, pepper, and toasted pine nuts and serve with grilled fish (particularly salmon) or chicken.
- Scatter raw or very lightly steamed peas on top of summer salads.