

Polenta with Asparagus, Peas and Mint

Serves 4

- 240 g polenta, coarse-grind cornmeal
- 1 tsp fine salt, plus more as needed
- 56 to 84 g unsalted butter
- 23 g grated Parmesan, or more to taste, plus shaved Parmesan for serving
- 2 T extra-virgin olive oil, plus more as needed
- 1 small red onion, thinly sliced
- 3 thinly sliced garlic cloves
- 2 T dry white wine
- 900 g asparagus, trimmed and cut into 2.5-cm pieces
- 248 g frozen or fresh peas (no need to thaw frozen peas first)
- 80 ml vegetable or chicken stock
- ½ C torn mint leaves, or use parsley, cilantro or a combination of any soft herbs
- Freshly ground black pepper



Prepare polenta:

1. In a medium pot over **high heat**, combine about **1 liter of water**, **polenta** and **1 tsp salt**.
2. Bring to a simmer, stirring frequently, until thickened, **30 to 40 minutes**, depending on how finely the polenta is ground (coarse-ground polenta takes longer).
3. When polenta is thick and creamy, stir in **28 to 56 g of the butter** (depending on how buttery you like it) and the **parmesan**. Taste and add more parmesan and salt, if needed.

Prepare vegetables:

4. In a large skillet, heat **oil** over **medium heat**.
5. Add **onions** and sauté until tender and golden, **4 to 6 minutes**.
6. Stir in **garlic** and cook for **another minute or two**, until fragrant and very lightly golden in spots.
7. Add **white wine** and cook until alcohol evaporates, **about 2 to 3 minutes**.
8. Stir in **asparagus** and **peas**, and cook until vegetables are glossy, **2 to 3 minutes**.
9. Add **stock**, remaining **28 g butter** and a large pinch of **salt**, and bring to a simmer. Cook until vegetables are tender and sauce thickens slightly, **2 to 8 minutes**. (Thicker asparagus will take longer to soften.)
10. Stir in the **mint**. Taste and add more **salt**, if needed.
11. To serve, spoon polenta into bowls, top with vegetables and their sauce, and grind on lots of fresh **pepper**. Finish with shaved **Parmesan**.

Protein adds: scallops, shrimp