

Pea Crostini with Ricotta and Mint

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When it comes to appetizers, there is one dish that almost every Italian keeps in their recipe arsenal: crostini. Meaning "little toasts," the warm, slightly crunchy slices of bread can be whipped up in a matter of minutes and topped with just about anything, from juicy heirloom tomatoes in the summer to earthy mushrooms in the fall. However during spring, we're all about the greens: asparagus, fava beans, and ramps could all be potential crostini toppers. In this recipe, we've dressed up delicate spring peas with fresh mint, lemon zest, and extra virgin olive oil, using a spread of ricotta cheese as "the glue" to hold the peas on top of each crostini slice. The result? A crunchy, creamy, and zesty antipasto perfect for a springtime gathering or picnic.

Yield: 4 servings

2 cups green peas, shells removed



lemon zest from 2 whole lemons
2 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil, for drizzling
a few small pinches of Maldon sea salt
8 fresh mint leaves, torn
a fresh loaf of bread, cut into 4 slices
4 tablespoons ricotta

Bring a medium-sized pot of water to boil. Add a handful of kosher salt.

Meanwhile, prepare an ice bath for the peas.

Blanch peas in the pot of salted boiling water. After about 30 seconds, scoop the peas out from the water and transfer into the prepared ice bath. Strain. Let cool and set aside. (This can be done ahead of time, up to 24 hours in advance. Store peas in the fridge until ready to use.)

Dress peas with lemon zest, Maldon sea salt, extra virgin olive oil, and torn mint leaves. Gently toss everything together until the peas are well-coated.

Toast slices of bread. Just before serving, spread about one tablespoon of ricotta cheese on each slice. Carefully spoon pea mixture on top and garnish with a few mint leaves. Drizzle each with extra virgin olive oil and sprinkle a pinch of Maldon sea salt.

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