



Asparagus, English Pea and Leek Soup

Servings: 6

1 Tablespoon Olive Oil or Canola Oil
 1 ½ pounds asparagus, stalks peeled and coarsely chopped (about 2 cups)
 ¼ cup chopped shallots
 1 cup chopped leeks, both white and tender green parts
 ½ cup chopped, peeled celery
 ¼ cup chopped, peeled carrot
 1-2 cloves garlic, minced
 1 Tablespoon chopped fresh thyme
 ½ cup white wine
 6 cups vegetable or chicken stock
 2 cups freshly shelled English Peas
 1 Tablespoon freshly squeezed lemon juice
 Sea salt to taste

Nonfat Greek Yogurt mixed with lemon juice for garnish

6 Tablespoons Greek Yogurt
 2 teaspoons fresh lemon juice

Whisk together and refrigerate until ready to serve.

In a stockpot, heat the oil and sauté the shallots, leek, celery, and carrots until just translucent. Add the asparagus and continue to sauté until soft, 3-5 minutes. Add the garlic and continue to sauté just until the aroma of garlic is noticeable. Then, add the wine, simmer and reduce by half, scraping pan to incorporate into soup. Next, add the stock and bring just to a boil. Turn down heat to a simmer for 10-15 minutes, until all vegetables are soft. Add the peas and cook for 5-6 more minutes just until they are soft.

Remove from heat and allow to cool slightly. Pureé with an immersion blender (one of my favorite tools!) if available or alternatively in a blender in small batches. If using a blender, as when pureeing anything warm, leave the blender top ajar and place a dishtowel over the top to catch any soup that escapes.

Serve the soup warm or cold garnished with a swirl of the Greek Yogurt with lemon.

IN YOUR GLASS

With the bright yet delicate springtime flavors of this soup we have enjoyed a glass of Shafer Red Shoulder Ranch® Chardonnay as well as a selection of wines from Chablis (also Chardonnay). It's also great to try some lesser-known whites such as an elegant Vermentino from Tuscany's Bolgheri coast with its fruit forward essence and pleasurable minerality.