

## Pick of the month

### English Garden Peas

My parents grew peas in the garden and, much to their annoyance, I would sit amongst them on the warm soil popping the tiny, sweet-tasting, fresh peas out of their shells and into my mouth. There's a lot more to humble peas than meets the eye. They are full of antioxidants, vitamin A, which is great for skin, and vitamin K, making it good for bones.

### Omelette With Peas and Ham

Peas – you can use fresh or frozen – and ham make a great accompaniment to the omelette. This quick dish is usually a hit with children, too.

Serves 2

#### Ingredients

- 2 eggs
- Salt and freshly ground black pepper
- Knob of butter
- 200g (7oz) frozen or fresh peas
- 100g (3½oz) cubed ham
- 100ml (3½fl oz) double cream

#### Method

To make the omelette, whisk two eggs together in a bowl and season with salt and freshly ground black pepper. Heat a knob of butter in a small non-stick pan until it begins to bubble. Pour the egg mixture into the pan and, as the eggs cook and solidify, gently pull the edges into the centre of the pan with a fork. Swirl the pan so the raw egg mixture fills the edges of the omelette and repeat four or five times. Shake the pan to loosen the omelette and cook to your liking. Slowly slide the omelette straight out of the pan onto a plate, folding in half as it falls onto the plate.

To make the pea and ham accompaniment, bring a saucepan of salted water to the boil, add the peas and boil for 3 minutes. Strain the peas well and then add them to a pan with the ham and cream and season to taste. Heat through and serve with the omelette.



#### Book of the month

### Tom Aikens Easy

by Tom Aikens (Ebury Press, £25) As the title suggests, the key to this book is simplicity. Tom Aikens is a wonderful chef and this book has over 200 fuss-free recipes. There's lots of hearty food, such as roasts, pies and delicious desserts. I especially love his classics with a twist like this great Ham And Mustard Macaroni recipe, which is simply delicious.

### Ham And Mustard Macaroni Serves 4

Simple but hearty, macaroni cheese is many a child's favourite dish, but the twist in this easy-to-make recipe is the fantastic idea of also adding ham and mustard to the mix, which both complement the cheese perfectly.

#### Ingredients

- 600ml (20fl oz) milk
- A few thyme sprigs
- 2 bay leaves
- 45g (1½oz) unsalted butter
- 50g (1¾oz) flour
- Sea salt and freshly ground black pepper
- 50g (1¾oz) Gruyère cheese, grated, plus extra for topping
- 30g (1oz) Parmesan cheese, grated
- 20g (¾oz) Dijon mustard
- 20g (¾oz) wholegrain mustard
- 400g (14oz) cooked macaroni
- 200g (7oz) cooked ham
- Handful of parsley, chopped

#### Method

Pour the milk into pan, add the thyme and bay leaves and heat gently until warm. Leave to infuse for 10 minutes. Preheat the oven



to 180°C/350°F/Gas Mark 4. Melt the butter in a pan on a low heat, then stir in the flour and cook for 2–3 minutes. Slowly add the milk, stirring with a spoon. When the sauce has simmered for about 5 minutes, remove the thyme and

bay leaves, and season with the salt and freshly ground black pepper. Add the cheeses and mustards, mix in the pasta, ham and parsley and tip everything into an earthenware dish. Top with the extra Gruyère and bake for 20 minutes.

### On Junior's shopping list this month



\* Busy mothers can now eat a healthy snack bar while on the go. Packed with only natural ingredients, Get Buzzing cereal bars provide a sustained energy boost and flavours include High-Protein Berry, Nut-Free Banana and Original Nutty. £1.25 from Waitrose.

\* Winner of a prestigious Great Taste Award, Butternut Squash and Sage Tortelli by The Fresh Pasta Company is quick to cook and very tasty. £5.99 for 250g from Ocado.

\* Created by Danish designer Josefine Bentzen, the Fabrikators Toddler Table Cutlery is designed especially for babies. Including a spoon, fork and knife, each set is available in blue, red or green and costs £32.99 from [www.littlepumpkin.co.uk](http://www.littlepumpkin.co.uk)

