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ASPARAGUS, SNAP PEA & CHIVE BLOSSOM PASTA

Our farmers market visits may be weather dependent now that we live in Chicago, but when the season is right, the markets are flourishing. This recipe was inspired by a visit to the Logan Square Farmers Market in the early spring. I came home with some gorgeous snap peas, asparagus, and these perfect purple chive blossoms that are delicious sprinkled over everything (note: regular chives work here too). The pasta shape in this recipe mimics the size of the snap peas and the cut asparagus. It feels like you're eating a big plate of pasta, but really it's half vegetables.

Serves 4

Gluten Free: Use gluten-free pasta.

Zest and juice of 1 lemon
1½ teaspoons Dijon mustard
10 ounces penne or casarecce pasta
2 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil
5 radishes, halved or quartered
1 (8-ounce) bunch asparagus, ends trimmed, cut into 1-inch pieces
1½ cups snap peas, trimmed
½ cup chopped chives
½ teaspoon sea salt, plus more to taste
Freshly ground black pepper
2 garlic cloves, minced
¼ cup dry white wine
⅔ cup grated Parmesan cheese
3 tablespoons chive blossoms or chopped chives
2 tablespoons thyme flowers or fresh thyme leaves

Mix together the lemon juice and mustard. Set aside.

Bring a large pot of salted water to a boil. Prepare the pasta according to the instructions on the package, cooking until al dente. Reserve ½ cup of the starchy pasta water, then drain.

Heat 1 tablespoon of the olive oil in a large skillet over medium heat. Add the radishes, asparagus, snap peas, chives, salt, and a few grinds of pepper. Cook for 3 to 4 minutes, until the green vegetables are tender but still have a vibrant bite. Stir in the garlic and the white wine and cook for 1 minute to slightly reduce the wine.

Remove the skillet from the heat and stir in the pasta. Add the lemon-mustard mixture, the reserved pasta water, ⅓ cup of the Parmesan cheese, and the lemon zest. Toss until coated. Taste and adjust seasonings. Transfer to a platter and garnish with the chive blossoms and the thyme flowers.

Drizzle with the remaining 1 tablespoon olive oil and serve with the remaining ⅓ cup Parmesan cheese.



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