

SUGAR SNAP PEAS

Nutrition and Health

Sugar snap peas are high in vitamins A and C. A one cup serving has 40 calories.

Selection

Snap peas are at their best when the pods are 2½ to 3 inches long and plump with mature peas.

Storage

Keep unwashed peas in plastic wrap or bags in the refrigerator. Fresh peas can be kept this way for 10 days. After this time, they begin to get starchy and lose juiciness.

Preparation

Wash well, pull the strings off and trim ends. Leave the pods whole, or cut into one-inch pieces.

Snap peas require very little cooking. They may be steamed or sautéed in vegetable oil until tender-crisp. If they are overcooked, the pods will fall apart and the flavor is destroyed.

Blanching will preserve snap peas' flavor and color. To prepare for blanching, select and wash bright green, flat, tender pods. Remove stems, blossom ends and any strings, but leave pods whole. Bring one gallon of water in a kettle to a rolling boil and immerse the pods. Cover small pods for 2 minutes and large pods for 3 minutes. Cool, drain and package, leaving ½ inch headspace. Seal and freeze.

Freezing is the best preservation method for sugar snap peas. Canning is not recommended because the peas will become mushy during processing.

Recipes

Stir-Fried Vegetables and Chicken

2 chicken breasts
1 cup teriyaki marinade sauce

¼ to ½ cup vegetable oil
½ cup onion, sliced
½ cup carrot, thinly sliced
1 cup green peppers, sliced
2 cups sugar snap peas
1½ cup broccoli (small pieces)
1 cup sliced celery
1 small can water chestnuts
1 tablespoon cornstarch
½ cup chicken broth
¼ to ½ cup soy sauce

Place chicken breasts in the teriyaki marinade for at least 2 hours, but preferably overnight, in the refrigerator, turning a couple of times.

Saute meat in vegetable oil on low heat for 5 minutes. Remove from heat and slice thinly, returning to the pan. Add onions and carrots on high heat, stir (1 to 2 minutes).

Add rest of vegetables, cook 3 minutes. Mix cornstarch in a small portion of broth, then add cornstarch mixture with the broth and soy sauce. Cook until thick and glossy. Serve over rice.

Chinese-Style Pod Peas

4 green onions with tops, chopped
1 cup chicken stock
¼ cup vegetable oil
4 cups fresh pea pods
2 5-ounce cans water chestnuts, drained and chopped
1 to 2 tablespoons soy sauce
½ teaspoon salt
1 tablespoon cornstarch, mixed with an additional
¼ cup chicken stock

Cook green onions in oil in skillet for 2 minutes. Add peas and water chestnuts. Cook, stirring another 2 minutes. Add remaining ingredients. Cook, stirring until mixture comes to a boil and is transparent. Simmer briefly until pea pods are barely tender and still crispy.

Garlic Snow Peas

2 cups fresh snow peas, washed, dried and trimmed
1 tablespoon sesame oil
3 minced garlic cloves
salt and pepper

Heat wok on medium-high heat. Add oil; when it gets hot, add peas. Stir-fry for 1 minute. Add garlic and seasoning.

Cook just until bright green and still crisp. Take care to not overcook.

Salmon, Snow Pea and Potato Salad

1 pound red potatoes, cut into chunks
6 ounces snow peas, trimmed
¾ cup water
3 strips lemon zest
12-ounce salmon fillet
2 tablespoons light mayonnaise
2 tablespoons fresh lemon juice
1 tablespoon reduced sodium soy sauce
¼ teaspoon salt
¼ cup minced dill
1 10-ounce package frozen corn kernels, thawed
6 cups mixed salad greens

In a vegetable steamer, steam the potatoes until firm tender, 7 to 10 minutes. Add the snow peas during the last 1 minute of cooking time.

In a small skillet, bring the water and lemon zest to a boil over medium heat. Add the salmon, reduce to a simmer, cover and cook until the fish just flakes

when tested with a fork, about 7 minutes.

Transfer salmon to a plate and set aside to cool. Strain the poaching liquid and reserve ½ cup. When cool enough to handle, pull off skin and cut fish into bite-size chunks.

In large bowl, whisk together the reserved poaching liquid, mayonnaise, lemon juice, soy sauce and salt. Stir in dill.

Add potatoes, snow peas and corn, tossing to coat with the dressing. Gently fold in the salmon. Serve the salmon salad on a bed of greens.

Italian Roasted Snow Peas

1 large leek, white part only, halved lengthwise and thoroughly washed
1 pound sugar snap peas, trimmed
2 teaspoons extra-virgin olive oil
½ teaspoon salt
1 cup cherry tomatoes, halved
1 teaspoon dried oregano

Preheat oven to 425°F.

Cut leek halves into 2-inch lengths and then very thinly slice each piece lengthwise into 2-inch-long strips. Toss the leek strips, peas, oil and salt in a medium bowl. Spread evenly on a baking sheet.

Roast for 15 minutes. Stir in tomatoes. Return to the oven and roast until the vegetables begin to brown, about 10 minutes more. Toss with oregano and serve.

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