

Saffron aioli with asparagus, jerseys & peas

PREP TIME
20 mins

COOK TIME
10 mins

SERVES
4

Ingredients

For the saffron aioli

Pinch saffron threads
Juice of ½ lemon
Pinch of salt
1 small garlic clove, peeled
and grated
2 yolks
200ml / 7fl oz light olive oil

400g / 14 oz jersey royals or
other baby potatoes, scrubbed
200g / 7 oz asparagus
(trimmed weight)
2 handfuls fresh peas in their pods

For the chopped gribiche

60g / 2 oz gherkins
2 tbsp baby capers, drained
(or rinsed if packed in salt)
3 tbsp chopped dill, plus a few
more sprigs to garnish
2 tbsp Dijon
2 tbsp extra virgin olive oil

4 eggs

Could there be a lunch more spring-like than the combination of orange juice-hued yolks against spring greens and waxy potatoes? This pared back take on a classic niçoise with fresh asparagus pairs well with a sunshine yellow saffron aioli to bring it all together. Lay the table and take an extra long lunch break in the sun with this salad.

1. Pound the saffron in a pestle and mortar and leave to steep in the lemon juice while you make the aioli.
2. Add the grated garlic to a bowl with the salt and crack in the egg yolks. Whisk together, then add the oil about a tbsp at a time, whisking well in between until it's thick and unctuous.
3. A small amount at a time, stir the lemon juice and saffron into the aioli (the more you add the looser it will become, so if you prefer it very firm, add just a little). Set aside to chill.
4. Bring a pan of salted water to the boil with the potatoes in it. Simmer until tender (a knife will easily slide into them). Set aside.
5. Blanch the asparagus in the same water. Pop the peas out of their pods.
6. Finely chop the gherkins, and roughly chop the capers. Add to a bowl with the dill, Dijon and olive oil.
7. Boil the eggs for 6 mins 15 sec from boiling and set aside. Peel.
8. Pile the potatoes, asparagus and peas onto a plate. Top with the gribiche, extra dill and soft eggs. Then serve with the saffron aioli on the side for people to generously dollop on top.