Ham Pea Mustard Supper Loaf

One creamy ham-and-pea loaf, about 3¾ cups (920 ml); 4 modest cold ham-course portions · Active 30 min · Total 10 hr 30 min

Ingredients

- 1 cup plain frozen peas (150 g)
- Water for peas according to packet, drained away
- 2 standard ¼-ounce envelopes unflavored powdered gelatin (14 g total), of specified setting strength
- 6 tablespoons cold drinking water (90 ml)
- 1¼ cups clear ready-to-use low-sodium chicken broth (300 ml)
- ⅓ cup plus 1 tablespoon plain pasteurized sour cream (100 g), kept cold
- 1 tablespoon Dijon mustard (15 g)
- ⅛ teaspoon black pepper
- 9 oz fully cooked ready-to-eat ham (250 g), safely chilled and cut into ¼-inch (5 mm) dice
- ¼ teaspoon neutral oil (1.25 ml), for wiping mold

Set out

Covered saucepan for peas and colander, Shallow cooling tray, Knife and board, Small saucepan, Two mixing bowls and whisk, Scale and measuring jug, Metal loaf mold of at least 1¼-liter capacity, Paper towel, Food thermometer, Cold platter, Refrigerator

Allergens

Milk, Mustard. Check labels and substitutions.

Make it

1. Cook peas fully using the actual packet water and time. Drain, spread on a shallow tray and refrigerate promptly until cold, allowing about 30 minutes or longer as needed. Check ham is fully cooked ready to eat cold and within its earlier deadline. Keep ham refrigerated. Check mold capacity, dry and oil lightly.

2. Bloom gelatin over 90 ml cold water in the mixing bowl 5–10 minutes. Warm broth to 140–150°F (60–65°C), remove from heat and stir into gelatin until fully dissolved. Cool until merely lukewarm.

3. Put the cold sour cream in a second mixing bowl. Whisk 3 tablespoons of the cold sour cream gradually INTO the lukewarm dissolved-gelatin base until smooth. Then gradually whisk that smooth tempered mixture into the remaining cold sour cream with mustard and pepper. Refrigerate 15–30 minutes until lightly thickened, stirring gently.

4. Fold in cold dry peas and ham dice. Transfer to loaf mold with at least ½ inch (1.25 cm) headroom; place excess in a separate small refrigerator cup. Cover and refrigerate at 40°F (4°C) or below at least 8 hours until firm. Allow 10½ hours total including pea cooking/cooling.

5. For unmolding, set a cold plate beside the refrigerator. Dip only the outside of the metal mold in warm, not hot, water, about 100°F (38°C), for 5–8 seconds without letting water touch food. Dry the outside, loosen just the upper edge with a clean fingertip and invert onto the plate. If stuck, repeat a brief dip rather than shaking violently. Refrigerate again immediately if not serving now. Cut 4 modest ham-course portions or 8 smaller side slices, clearly changing the serving role.

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Gelatin starting strength

Use food-grade unflavored powdered gelatin with a manufacturer benchmark of 7 g for about 2 cups (500 ml) plain liquid. Weigh the stated grams: envelope sizes and powder density vary. A flavored dessert packet, collagen peptides, sheet gelatin or agar is not an equal substitute.

Cold service

This is an original retro-inspired recipe, not a recovered 1960s formula. Gelatin is animal-derived; the vegetable ingredients do not make the dish vegetarian. A reliable refrigerator and the stated earlier ingredient deadlines are essential.

Ingredient labels

Ham and broth may add wheat, soy, celery or other ingredients. Mustard can cause allergy although it is not one of the nine major US categories.

A useful detail

Free broth/water totals 390 ml, plus 100 g sour cream, 15 g mustard, 250 g ham and 150 g peas. Finished volume is roughly 920 ml. Fourteen grams gelatin gives a firm savory loaf; the lack of added salt is deliberate because ham, broth and Dijon vary substantially.

Keep it well

Keep covered at 40°F (4°C) or below. Use within 2 days of assembly or the earliest ham, dairy or cooked-pea deadline, whichever comes first; include the overnight set. Do not start with meat too old to remain within its original limit through setting and service. Keep cumulative preparation/service below 2 hours, or 1 hour above 90°F (32°C); discard beyond it. Do not freeze.