Chicken Pea Lemon Orzo

2 bowls, each with half the chicken, peas and lemon orzo · Active 40 min · Total 1 hr 10 min

Skills: Beginner with ordinary kitchen equipment

Ingredients

- 9 oz raw boneless skinless chicken breast, cut into 3/4-inch/2 cm pieces (250 g)
- 3/4 cup dry orzo pasta (140 g)
- 1 cup frozen green peas (160 g), not thawed
- 1 small onion, finely diced (80 g)
- 1 garlic clove, minced (3 g)
- 2 teaspoons olive oil (10 ml/about 9 g)
- 2 cups water (480 ml), plus a small boiling-water splash if needed
- 4 teaspoons lemon juice (20 ml/about 20 g)
- 2 tablespoons chopped dill (8 g)
- 1/2 teaspoon fine salt (3 g)
- 1/8 teaspoon black pepper (0.3 g)

Set out

28 cm/11-inch deep skillet with tight lid, Knife and separate raw-chicken board or cleaned board, Spoon, Kitchen scale, Measuring jug, Kettle for a little boiling water if needed, Food thermometer, Extra small saucepan only if pea packet timing requires separate cooking, 2 bowls

Allergens

Wheat; check dry pasta for egg or other added allergens. Check labels and substitutions.

Make it

1. Read orzo and frozen-pea cooking instructions before heating the skillet. Prepare vegetables first, then cut raw chicken and wash its board, utensils and your hands.

2. Heat oil over medium heat. Cook onion for 7–9 minutes until softened. Add chicken pieces and cook for 4–5 minutes, turning, until the outsides lose their raw appearance. Add garlic for 30 seconds, then stir in dry orzo.

3. Add measured water, salt and pepper, bring to a gentle boil, cover loosely and simmer on low for the orzo packet's expected time, usually 10–12 minutes. Stir along the base twice. Add the still-frozen peas when their full package cooking time remains: for 10-minute orzo and 5-minute peas, add them after the first 5 minutes. If peas need longer than the entire orzo time, cook them separately as directed and fold them in near the end.

4. Continue until peas have received their full required cooking, orzo is tender with a moist coating, and the thickest chicken pieces reach 165°F/74°C. Add a splash of boiling water if the pan dries too soon; simmer uncovered briefly if too wet. Do not finish a full pasta cooking interval and then add another complete pea interval.

5. Remove from heat, stir in lemon juice and dill and divide all contents evenly between 2 bowls.

A useful kitchen skill

Coordinate a frozen vegetable's full required cooking with the pasta time instead of adding two complete cooking intervals in sequence.

A useful detail

The 70-minute total allows beginner chopping, staged cooking and packet differences. The estimate uses raw chicken, frozen unprepared peas and dry enriched pasta by weight. The water contributes no calories and may need a little adjustment for the pan and packet.

Keep it well

Refrigerate promptly in shallow containers at 40°F/4°C or below within 2 hours, or 1 hour above 90°F/32°C. Use within 3 days. Reheat only the portion needed to 165°F/74°C throughout with a splash of water, stirring the orzo and checking chicken pieces. Freeze for up to 2 months and thaw in the refrigerator; pasta softens further.