Spring Pizza with Garlic Cream, Peas, Asparagus, & Prosciutto

From the blog For Love of the Table

Garlic Cream:
1 T. unsalted butter
2 or 3 cloves garlic, minced (or, in early summer use 1 stalk/head of green garlic—white/ivory and pale green parts—finely sliced)
salt & pepper
1 T. white wine (see notes)
1/4 c. heavy cream

1 recipe/10 oz. pizza dough made through the first rise and rested (recipe below)

1 scallion, root and tattered greens trimmed away (use as much of the white, pale green and dark green as you like)
2 oz. (trimmed weight) asparagus, thoroughly rinsed
2 oz. fresh peas (or frozen…thaw before using)
1/3 c. (1 oz.) finely grated Parmesan
1/2 to 1 t. olive oil
4 thin slices/sheets (2 oz.) prosciutto
3 oz. goat cheese, coarsely crumbled

An hour before baking the pizza, place a baking stone (if you have one) on the center rack in the oven and preheat the oven to 500°.

Make the garlic cream. Place a tablespoon of butter along with a tablespoon of water in a small sauce pan and set over moderately low heat. When the butter has melted, add the garlic along with a good pinch of salt. Gently stew the garlic until it is softened and the water has evaporated/been absorbed and the garlic has softened (about 5 minutes). Add the white wine and continue to simmer until the wine is reduced and the garlic is sizzling gently in the butter again. Add the cream and simmer until thickened and reduced by one third. You should have 3 or 4 tablespoons of a thick sauce. Taste and season with salt and pepper; set aside.

While the garlic cream cooks, prepare the toppings: slice the scallion very thinly on a long bias. Place in a small bowl and cover with ice water. Let sit for 5 to 10 minutes. Drain, rinse under running water, and blot well. Slice the asparagus very thinly (1/8 inch thick) on a long bias. Place the crisped scallions, asparagus and peas in a medium-sized bowl. Drizzle in a small amount of olive oil and season lightly with salt & pepper. Toss to coat. Add the Parmesan and toss again.

On a lightly floured surface, roll or stretch the dough out into a 12- to 13-inch circle. Transfer the dough to a rimless baking sheet or peel that has been dusted with semolina, fine cornmeal, or rice flour.

Spread the garlic cream over the crust, leaving a quarter to half inch border around the edges bare.

Tear two or three of the sheets of prosciutto into rough 1 1/2 to 2 inch pieces and arrange/ruffle evenly over the garlic cream. Scatter the vegetable mixture over the garlic cream, distributing evenly. Tear and arrange the remaining prosciutto over the vegetables. Crumble the goat cheese over all.

If using a pizza pan or baking sheet, place the pizza in its pan on the pizza stone in the pre-heated oven. Bake until the crust is golden brown on the bottom and the cheese is bubbling, about 8 to 10 minutes. To insure a crisp crust, after the crust has set (5 to 6 minutes), slide the pizza off of the pan to finish cooking directly on the pizza stone.

If you are using a pizza peel, slide the pizza directly onto the hot stone and bake until browned and bubbling (about 7 to 8 minutes). In my oven, I usually rotate the pizza after about 5 minutes so it will bake evenly.

When the pizza is done, transfer to a cutting board. Cut into wedges and serve. (If not serving immediately—if making a second pizza, for example—transfer the uncut pizza to a wire rack so that the crust won't get soggy.)

(*Garlic Cream* adapted from Food & Wine)

Notes:

- If you don't have …or don't want to use…wine, just continue to cook the garlic with water as needed until it is soft. Before adding the cream, make sure the garlic is sizzling in the butter (i.e. all the liquid—whether wine or water—has evaporated off).
- You may of course use purchased dough instead of making your own. Just make sure you have 10 oz./285 grams.

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Pizza Dough

1/2 cup (113g) warm water (100º-110º)
1 1/8 t. (1/2 package) active dry yeast
1 1/4 to 1 1/2 cups (145g to 170g) unbleached all-purpose flour
1 T. olive oil
1/2 t. salt

Combine the water, yeast, and 3/4 cup (85g) of the flour in a large bowl. Whisk until smooth. Add the oil, salt and another half cup (60g) of the flour. Stir with a wooden spoon to form a soft dough that holds its shape. Sprinkle some of the remaining flour on a smooth surface. Scrape the dough out of the bowl and sprinkle with a bit more flour. Knead the dough, adding just enough flour to keep the dough from sticking, until the dough is smooth and springs back when pressed lightly with a finger—about 5 to 10 minutes. Transfer the dough to a lightly oiled bowl and cover the bowl with plastic wrap. Let the dough rise until it has doubled in size—about 1 hour. Punch down the dough. At this point you may use the dough immediately or cover the bowl again with plastic wrap and refrigerate it for 12 to 24 hours. Pull the dough out of the refrigerator to let it warm up a bit, about an hour before baking the pizza.

When ready to make the pizza, turn the dough out onto a lightly floured surface. Roll the dough into a ball. Cover with a towel and let rest for 10 to 20 minutes. The dough is now ready to be shaped, topped and baked.

(Crust adapted from The New Basics Cookbook by Julee Rosso & Sheila Lukins)

Food Processor Method: Place the water and yeast in a small bowl and let sit until the yeast has dissolved. Place 160 grams (about 1 1/4 cups plus 2 T.) of the flour and salt in the food processor fitted with the metal blade and pulse to blend. Add the oil and yeast/water mixture and pulse until the dough is homogenous. Begin to run the mixture in long pulses until the dough is smooth and elastic—it shouldn't take more than a minute. If the dough seems wet and sticky, add some of the remaining 2 T. of flour a bit at a time, pulsing after each addition. Turn the dough out onto a lightly floured counter and give it a few kneads by hand. Let rise as directed above.

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