

SEASONED

NEWSLETTER



Welcome to Seasoned Newsletter #9. (If you missed the most recent one, it's [here](#).) We are huge fans of soups. For one thing, making them is generally a relaxing activity because they are so forgiving: you don't have to be too exact when adding ingredients or keeping track of cooking time. They are also very comforting, which is a good thing in these times. So in this issue we have recipes for two delicious and healthy soups, along with instructions on how to safely blend hot liquids. And of course we give you a kitchen hack, a balance exercise, and a tool you should have in your kitchen.

Let's get started!



Avgolemono

This Greek egg-lemon soup is a simple dish with a fancy-sounding name. It's delicious and healthy to eat—plus, it's easy, quick, and inexpensive to make. Unlike many egg-based soups, you won't see strips of egg in it; instead, avgolemono is creamy and rich.

HANDS-ON TIME: 15 MINUTES TOTAL TIME: 30 MINUTES MAKES: 4-5 CUPS

INGREDIENTS

- 4 cups low-sodium chicken broth
- 3 tablespoons orzo (rice-shaped pasta) or long-grain white rice
- 3 large eggs
- 2 tablespoons fresh lemon juice
- 2 tablespoons chopped fresh flat-leaf parsley or mint leaves, or dill or chives
- Grated lemon zest, for garnish (optional)

INSTRUCTIONS

1. In a medium-sized pot, bring the chicken broth to a boil over high heat. Add the orzo or rice, turn the heat down to low, and cook until tender, about 15 minutes.
2. While the orzo or rice is cooking, put the eggs and lemon juice in a medium-sized bowl and whisk until creamy yellow.
3. Temper the eggs: Using a ladle, very gradually add about 1 cup of the broth mixture to the egg mixture in the bowl, whisking constantly, so that the eggs don't curdle.
4. Slowly pour the egg-broth mixture back into the pot, whisking constantly, until the broth and eggs are completely combined. Cook over low heat for 5 minutes.
5. Serve right away, garnished with the herb of your choice and, if using, the grated lemon zest.

Or You Could

Add 1–2 cups shredded cooked chicken just before serving for a more substantial soup.

Tip If you're using the zest of the lemon (the yellow part of the skin), be sure to scrape it off with a grater or zester before you cut and juice the fruit.



How to: Temper eggs

If you add eggs directly to a hot liquid, you are likely to end up with little bits of cooked egg floating in the liquid. To avoid this, we do what is called “tempering.” This means slowly adding a bit of the hot liquid to the eggs while whisking. As you do this, the eggs slowly come up to a higher temperature without scrambling. Then you can safely add them to the larger batch of hot liquid.

Easy Pea Soup

This recipe is designed to use 8 ounces of frozen peas (half of a standard 1-pound package), but if you happen to buy peas in a 10-ounce package, go ahead and use the whole thing rather than leave a tiny bit in the bag. And you can use the peas right from the freezer—there's no need to thaw them. Store any leftover soup in the refrigerator for up to 3 days. It will thicken a little in the fridge, so when you reheat it, stir in a few tablespoons of water or chicken broth until you're happy with the consistency. BY ADAM RIED

HANDS-ON TIME: 20 MINUTES TOTAL TIME: 35 MINUTES MAKES: 2-3 SERVINGS (ABOUT 3 CUPS)

INGREDIENTS

- 2 teaspoons olive or vegetable oil
- 1 medium onion, peeled and chopped
- $\frac{3}{4}$ teaspoon kosher salt
- 1 (14.5-ounce) can low-sodium chicken broth
- $\frac{1}{4}$ cup water
- 8 ounces frozen peas (about $1\frac{3}{4}$ cups)
- $\frac{1}{4}$ cup plain yogurt
- Whole-grain croutons, for garnish (optional, go to www.seasonedmag.org and search "croutons" to make your own)

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Put a medium-sized saucepan on the stove, turn the heat to medium, and add the oil.
2. When the oil is hot, add the onion and salt and cook, stirring often, until the onion is soft and golden, about 6 minutes.
3. Add the chicken broth, water, and frozen peas. Raise the heat to medium-high, bring to a simmer, and cook until the peas are bright green and tender, 5 to 7 minutes. Remove the pot from the heat and let the soup rest until it stops steaming, 10 to 15 minutes.
4. Pour the mixture into a blender, add the yogurt, and blend until very smooth. Taste and add more salt if needed.
5. Serve, topped with croutons, if using. Or, if you'd like it hotter, pour the blended soup back into the pot, turn the heat to medium-low, and cook, stirring, to heat it through, about 5 minutes.

Or You Could

- **Omit the yogurt** and instead add 2 tablespoons pesto when you put the soup in the blender. (You can find jarred pesto near the tomato sauce in the supermarket, or fresh pesto in the refrigerated aisle.)
- **Add 4 thinly sliced scallions** (both white and green parts) to the pot as the mixture cools, before adding the yogurt and blending (it will be warm enough to soften the scallions a little).



How To: Blend Hot Liquids

- **Cool the mixture** slightly before blending it, or else pressure could build up and force the lid off.
- **Don't fill the blender** jar more than about two-thirds full.
- **Remove the center cap** from the blender lid, and hold a kitchen towel or pot holder over the hole as you blend to absorb the steam.
- **Start on low** and gradually increase the blender speed to medium-high.
- **Stop occasionally** to scrape down the inside of the blender jar if solids stick to it.



Tip: Storing Soup

Before refrigerating or freezing hot soup, bring it to room temperature within 2 hours by putting it in smaller containers and stirring with a metal spoon to release the heat.



Tip: When Frozen Is Better

Fresh peas are wonderful, but unless you grow them in your own garden, it's hard to get ahold of them before they start to turn starchy. So frozen peas, which are frozen right after harvesting, are often a better choice.

A Trick, a Tool, an Exercise

Back Leg Raise

1. Stand behind a chair and slowly lift your right leg straight back. Avoid bending the right knee or pointing the right foot.
2. Hold the position for 2 seconds.
3. Repeat 10 times with the right leg, then 10 times with the left leg.



Peel hard-cooked eggs the easy way

If you ever want to peel a batch of hard-cooked eggs all at once, when they have cooled down, put them all in a closed container, like a plastic storage container with a lid, and shake them hard for 10 seconds. The egg shells basically shatter and can easily be slipped off.



Perforated (Slotted) Spoon

It might seem like an indulgence, but a slotted spoon is very useful. It's the safest way to gently lower foods into hot oil or hot sauce (think of meatballs), or to retrieve hard-cooked eggs from boiling water. We particularly like the GIR Perforated Spoon (\$13) and the OXO Nylon Slotted Spoon (\$7) because both are very light.

