PEAS WITH BACON AND DILL

SERVES 4 TO 6

Active time: 20 min Start to finish: 20 min

- **4 thick bacon slices, cut crosswise into ¼-inch pieces**
- **1 small onion, chopped**
- **2 (10-oz) packages frozen baby peas, not thawed**
- **½ cup water**
- **1 teaspoon salt**
- **⅛ teaspoon black pepper**
- **2 tablespoons chopped fresh dill**
- **1 tablespoon unsalted butter**

▶ Cook bacon in a 10-inch heavy skillet over moderate heat, stirring occasionally, until browned, about 5 minutes. Spoon off all but 2 tablespoons fat from skillet (but leave bacon in skillet), then add onion and cook, stirring frequently, until beginning to soften, 3 to 4 minutes. Add peas, water, salt, pepper, and 1 tablespoon dill and cook, covered, stirring occasionally, until peas are tender, 5 to 8 minutes. Stir in butter and remaining tablespoon dill.

TOMATO AND CHEDDAR SOUFFLÉS

SERVES 4

Active time: 25 min Start to finish: 45 min

- **2 tablespoons unsalted butter plus 1 teaspoon, melted**
- **½ oz Parmigiano-Reggiano, finely grated with a rasp (½ cup)**
- **4 (¼-inch-thick) center-cut slices from a small tomato**
- **2 tablespoons all-purpose flour**
- **1 cup whole milk**
- **⅛ teaspoon salt**
- **⅛ teaspoon black pepper**
- **⅛ teaspoon cayenne**
- **2 oz coarsely shredded sharp Cheddar (½ cup) plus 2 tablespoons for sprinkling**
- **2 large eggs, separated**

Special equipment: **4 (6-oz) ovenproof custard cups or ramekins**

▶ Put oven rack in middle position and preheat oven to 400°F.

▶ Brush custard cups with 1 teaspoon melted butter (total), then coat each with 1 tablespoon Parmigiano-Reggiano. Put 1 tomato slice in bottom of each cup and arrange cups in a shallow baking pan.

▶ Heat remaining 2 tablespoons butter in a 1½-quart heavy saucepan over moderate heat until foam subsides, then whisk in flour. Cook roux, whisking, 1 minute, then whisk in milk, salt, pepper, and cayenne. Bring to a boil over moderate heat, whisking constantly, and boil until thickened, 3 to 4 minutes. Remove from heat and whisk in ½ cup Cheddar, 2 tablespoons Parmigiano-Reggiano, and yolks.

▶ Beat whites with a small pinch of salt using an electric mixer until they just hold stiff peaks. Fold one third of whites into cheese sauce to lighten, then fold in remaining whites gently but thoroughly. Divide mixture among cups and sprinkle with remaining 2 tablespoons each of Parmigiano-Reggiano and Cheddar.

▶ Bake soufflés until puffed and golden, 17 to 20 minutes. Serve (in cups) immediately.

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Baby peas cooked in bacon fat take on a smoky richness. Fresh dill adds a taste of spring.