

Salt and Serenity

Israeli Couscous with Pickled Shallots, Peas, Mint and Ricotta Salata

Very slightly adapted from Cook's Illustrated July 2015 issue.

Serves 4-6

1/3 cup red wine vinegar
2 tablespoons sugar
1/2 teaspoon kosher salt
2 shallots, thinly sliced into rings
2 cups Israeli couscous
1 Tablespoon extra-virgin olive oil
2 1/2 cups water
1/2 teaspoon kosher salt
3 Tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil
3 Tablespoons lemon juice
1 teaspoon Dijon mustard
1/8-1/4 teaspoon red pepper flakes
1/4 teaspoon kosher salt
4 ounces (4 cups) baby arugula, roughly chopped
1 cup fresh mint leaves, torn
1 cup frozen peas, thawed
1/2 cup shelled pistachios, toasted and chopped
3 ounces ricotta salata, cut into 1/4 inch cubes

1. Bring vinegar, sugar, and salt to simmer in small saucepan over medium-high heat, stirring occasionally, until sugar dissolves. Remove pan from heat, add shallots, and stir to combine. Cover and let cool completely, about 30 minutes. Drain and discard liquid.
2. Heat couscous and oil in medium saucepan over medium heat, stirring frequently, until about half of grains are golden brown, 5 to 6 minutes. Add water and salt; stir to combine. Increase heat to high and bring to boil. Reduce heat to medium-low, cover, and simmer, stirring occasionally, until water is absorbed, 9 to 12 minutes. Remove saucepan from heat and let stand, covered, for 3 minutes. Spread couscous out onto a baking sheet to cool.
3. Whisk oil, lemon juice, mustard, pepper flakes, and 1/8 teaspoon salt together in large bowl. Add cooled couscous, arugula, mint, peas, half the pistachios, half of the ricotta salata, and shallots and toss to combine. Season with salt and pepper to taste and transfer to serving bowl. Let stand for 5 minutes. Sprinkle with remaining pistachios and ricotta salata and serve.