

Za'atar Chicken & Pearl Couscous

with Asparagus & Pink Lemon Compote

Though it looks like a grain, pearl couscous, known as “ptitim” in Israel, is actually a special type of pasta. Semolina and wheat flours are rolled into little balls (or pearls), which are then toasted for nutty flavor and chewy texture. In this Middle Eastern-style recipe, we’re tossing pearl couscous with spring asparagus and serving it under our zesty, za’atar-seasoned chicken. The dish gets a refreshing pop of brightness from gorgeous pink-tinged lemon marinated in sweet agave nectar.

Blue Apron Wine Pairing

Rogers Vineyards Sauvignon Blanc, 2014



Ingredients

2 Boneless, Skinless Chicken Breasts
¾ Cup Pearl Couscous
1 Pink Lemon
½ Bunch Asparagus
1 Bunch Chives

Knick Knacks

1 Tablespoon Agave Nectar
1 Tablespoon Chicken Spice Blend
(Za'atar & Aleppo Pepper)

Makes: 2 servings | **Calories:** about 700 per serving
Prep Time: 10 minutes | **Cook Time:** 20–30 minutes

1



Prepare the ingredients:

Wash and dry the fresh produce. Heat a medium pot of salted water to boiling on high. Using a peeler, remove the rind of the lemon, avoiding the white pith; mince the rind to get 2 teaspoons of zest (or use a zester). Reserve the zested lemon. Snap off and discard the tough, woody ends of the asparagus; cut the asparagus into 1-inch pieces on an angle. Cut the chives into 1/2-inch pieces.

2



Cook the couscous:

Add the **couscous** to the pot of boiling water and cook 8 to 10 minutes, or until tender. Drain thoroughly and rinse under cool water for 20 to 30 seconds to prevent sticking.

3



Make the lemon compote:

While the couscous cooks, cut off and discard the top and bottom of the **zested lemon**; cut off and discard any remaining rind and white pith. Using a small knife, cut out the segments (or supremes) from between the membranes, discarding the seeds; transfer to a bowl. Squeeze the juice from the membranes over the supremes; discard the membranes. Stir in the **agave nectar**; season with salt and pepper. Set aside to marinate, stirring occasionally, for at least 10 minutes.

4



Cook the chicken:

While the lemon marinates, pat the **chicken** dry with paper towels; season on both sides with salt, pepper and the **spice blend**. In a large pan, heat 2 teaspoons of olive oil on medium-high until hot. Add the seasoned chicken and cook 4 to 6 minutes per side, or until browned and cooked through. Transfer to a plate, leaving any browned bits (or fond) in the pan. Set the cooked chicken aside in a warm place.

5



Finish the couscous:

Add 2 teaspoons of olive oil to the pan of reserved fond and heat on medium-high until hot. Add the **asparagus**; season with salt and pepper. Cook, stirring occasionally, 1 to 2 minutes, or until bright green. Add the **cooked couscous, lemon zest** and **2 tablespoons of water**; season with salt and pepper. Cook, stirring occasionally and scraping up any fond from the bottom of the pan, 1 to 2 minutes, or until thoroughly combined and heated through. Remove from heat.

6



Finish & plate your dish:

Just before serving, stir the **chives** into the bowl of **lemon compote**; season with salt and pepper to taste. Divide the **finished couscous** between 2 dishes. Top with the **cooked chicken**. Garnish the chicken with the lemon compote (including a few spoonfuls of the marinating liquid). Enjoy!