



SQUASH BLOSSOMS STUFFED WITH RICOTTA

Serves 4 (as appetizer) 2 (as main course)

INGREDIENTS:

- 1 cup whole-milk ricotta (preferably fresh)
- 1/4 cup finely chopped mint
- Finely grated zest of 1/2 lemon
- 2/3 cup grated Parmigiano-Reggiano, divided
- 12-16 large squash blossoms
- 1/2 cup all-purpose flour
- 3/4 cup chilled sparkling water
- 6 tablespoons of oil
- 1 cup cherry heirloom tomatoes
- Salt
- Pepper



PHOTOGRAPHY AND STYLING BY IGLIKA PETROVA

DIRECTIONS:

1. Mix together the ricotta, 1/3 parmesan, mint, lemon zest and a dash of salt and pepper in a medium bowl.
2. Carefully open each flower and by using your pointer finger remove the pollen stem that is inside (the pollen stem is quite bitter and if not removed, it will leave an unpleasant taste).
3. Fill a piping or a plastic bag with the ricotta mixture and pipe the filling inside the flower cup until it is 2/3 full. Slightly press to flatten each flower, making sure the filling is not coming out.
4. Whisk together the flour, remaining parmesan, a dash of salt and the sparkling in a medium bowl.
5. Heat an empty 10-inch heavy skillet over medium high heat. Meanwhile, pour the batter into a large shallow plate. Coat both sides of 1/3 of the blossoms by dipping them into the batter. Add 2 tablespoons of oil into the hot skillet and carefully add the flowers. Fry each side until golden, about 2-3 minutes total. Repeat the process 2 more times with the remaining oil and 2/3 of flowers.

Serve with halved cherry heirloom tomatoes.