

# Sunday Supper : Stovetop Spring Gratin

1½c orrchetti or capelletti

½ package frozen vegetables (spinach, asparagus, edamame, broccoli)

4oz diced cooked ham

chopped leeks

2T butter

1T dijon mustard

½t dried thyme

salt & pepper

¼c cream

4oz shredded cheese (I used jack)

So I start the well-salted water boiling for the pasta. Once that was going, I toss in the pasta and set the timer for 10 minutes. In a large frying pan, over high heat, I put in the frozen vegetables and some water, and put a lid on to let the steam thaw them. Meanwhile, I diced the ham, and the leeks, and stir them in to heat up, too, along with the mustard and thyme, mixing the mustard in with the water to loosen it. Once the pasta is done, I remove the lid and, using a spider, I put it in the pan with the butter. I waited until the water was almost gone, stirring frequently, at which point I turned the heat to low, and added the cream and the cheese, and let it simmer for a couple of minutes. Start to finish, 17 minutes, not counting the time it took for the pasta water to come to the boil.

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# Glazed Ham Steak



I think it was supposed to be Dorothy Parker who said that the definition of *eternity* is two people and a whole ham. A whole ham is a great, economical way to feed a crowd of people, but for two people, it's way too much of a commitment. I've foolishly attempted to buy a whole ham and cook it up for the two of us, and by day four, my imagination on how to eat it for another meal has completely unraveled, and I've begun looking for ways to get rid of it.

That's why the ham steak was invented, I think. It's enough ham for one or two meals, and then you're done. Pick a hamsteak that looks like it used to be part of a pig. If it has a bone in it, all the better. The overly pink and round ones are mystery meat, and have a way too spongy consistency. Once you have them, here's a good way to make it, and you probably have all the ingredients on hand.

*¼c maple syrup*

*1T dijon mustard*

*1T cider vinegar*

Mix all of these things in a bowl and brush one side of the ham slice, and put it in a frying pan over medium heat. Brush the upside while the bottom side sizzles a bit. Turn it over every few minutes, and brush the thickening run off back onto the steak. Watch the heat, because maple syrup is just sugar, and it can burn pretty quickly.