

Lemon Risotto

This is a deceptively simple risotto dish, that will surprise with its subtle multi layered flavours. It holds its own on the dinner table or can be served alongside a piece of grilled fish or chicken breast and paired with a salad.

Ingredients

serves 6 - 8

¼ cup (60ml) olive oil

1 - 2 small brown onions or leeks, finely diced

1 small bulb fennel finely diced

2 cloves garlic, finely diced

300g risotto rice

125ml white wine

1.75 litres hot vegetable or chicken stock

(keep hot on the cooktop) + water

1 bunch asparagus* or 2 large zucchini cut into baton

150g snap peas or 1 cup frozen peas

1 bunch English spinach or 50g leaves

50ml lemon or lime juice

zest of 1 lemon or lime

1 cup parsley or mint, roughly chopped

plenty black pepper

1 cup grated parmesan

Salt to taste

⅓ cup lightly toasted pine nuts or pepitas

*use seasonal vegetables such as zucchini and its flowers, snap peas, snow peas, beans etc.

Method

1. Saute onion and/ or leek and fennel in olive oil in a large stainless steel frying pan or saucepan for around 10 minutes over medium heat or until the veg are transparent but not browned.
2. Add garlic and stir another minute, occasionally.
3. Add rice and stir a few minutes until well coated in oil.
4. Add white wine and stir until almost absorbed.
5. Heat stock in a saucepan on the hotplate and keep warm.
6. Add 1 cup (250ml) stock and stir gently with a wooden spoon. Continue stirring occasionally until almost absorbed.
7. Add another 3 cups, 1 at a time, and continue as above.
8. Meanwhile, prepare the vegetables, herbs, lemon and cheese.
9. Add zucchini with 3rd cup.
10. After the 5th cup of stock, add the snap peas/ frozen peas, reserving some for garnish.
11. Add the spinach.
12. Continue stirring until all of the stock is used or the rice is almost cooked to your liking and the sauce is creamy but still a little more liquid than ideal (as it will continue to cook and thicken once removed from the heat. Risotto should be creamy, not soupy and definitely not stodgy.
13. Remove from heat and stir in half of the parmesan, lemon juice and zest, herbs and pepper.
14. Taste and adjust as desired.
15. Serve immediately, sprinkled with herbs, pine nuts or pepitas, black pepper & extra cheese on the side or on the top.

Lou Edney is a certified practising nutritionist who runs a cooking school & catering business in Sydney. For workplace wellness workshops, nutrition consults, classes, seminars and catering enquiries, please visit the Nourishing Nosh website or call us directly.