

Spring Risotto

Serves 2-3 as a main course

Everyone gets their vegetables in this delicious and nutritious dish.

4 cups less-sodium chicken or vegetable broth
4 tablespoons unsalted butter, divided
1 leek, white and light green part thinly sliced, washed
1 celery stalk, finely chopped
1 carrot, peeled and finely chopped
1/4 lb Cremini mushrooms, stems removed and sliced
8 thin asparagus stalks, sliced into 1-inch lengths
2 garlic cloves, minced
1 cup Arborio rice
1/2 cup dry vermouth or white wine
1/2 cup frozen green peas
1 large handful of spinach
1/2 cup grated parmesan cheese
Salt, to taste
Freshly ground black pepper, to taste
Garnish: chopped flat leaf parsley

In a small saucepan, heat the chicken broth over low heat until hot.

Melt three tablespoons of the butter in a heavy bottomed pot over medium heat. Add the leek, celery, and carrot and cook until just beginning to soften, stirring occasionally, for about 3 minutes. Add the sliced mushrooms and chopped asparagus and cook, stirring constantly, for another 3 to 5 minutes or until the mushrooms begin to soften. Add in the minced garlic and cook for 30 seconds, until fragrant.

Stir in the Arborio rice and stir constantly until the grains become opaque in the center. This usually takes between 3 to 5 minutes.

Add the vermouth to the rice and stir until all the liquid has been absorbed. In 1/2-cup ladlefuls, add the broth to the rice, stirring after each addition until almost all the liquid has been absorbed. Repeat until most of the broth has been added (usually risotto requires about 3 cups liquid) or until the risotto reaches your desired tenderness (I like mine with a little bite). Be patient. This can take up to 30 minutes.

When you've added almost all of the liquid, stir in the frozen peas and spinach and cook until the peas are cooked and the spinach has wilted. When the risotto is to your liking, stir in the Parmesan and the remaining tablespoon of butter. Season the risotto to taste with salt and freshly ground black pepper. Cover and let sit for five minutes before serving. Serve sprinkled with a little chopped parsley.

This recipe came from *Minced* at www.mincedblog.com.